

The True Witness

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE
Is published every Thursday by
The True Witness P. & P. Co.
25 St. Antoine St., Montreal, P. Q.
P. O. BOX 1138

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE.
Canada [City Excepted], United
States and Newfoundland... \$1.00
City and Foreign... \$1.50
Terms: Payable in Advance.

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NOTE WELL.—Matter intended for
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CORRESPONDENCE and items of
local Catholic interest solicited.



THURSDAY, JANUARY 2nd, 1908.

Episcopal Approbation.

If the English Speaking Catholics of Montreal and of the Province consulted their best interests, they would so make of the TRUE WITNESS one of the most prosperous and powerful Catholic papers in this country. I heartily bless those who encourage this excellent work.

† PAUL.
Archbishop of Montreal.

1908.

We are once more standing upon the threshold of a new year. The Christmas message of peace has come across the centuries to us and centered itself, as of old, in the forlorn little crib. Hardened hearts now, as then, shut themselves to the gentle Babe. They know Him not, there is no room. Now sitting quietly communing with ourselves we find we cannot wash our hands of guilt, and we have much cause for regret. We have not welcomed Him as, in the years ago, the shepherds did; we have not let Him enter into the life-spring of our being; we have made Him no offering of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Heart-searching should be ours on the first day of the year. Nineteen hundred and seven is fast receding, spectre-like, into the past, taking with it our aspirations, our hopes, our sorrows and our joys, leaving naught to us but happy memories or sad regrets. Few of us, if any, who have not been touched with sorrow's dart; many, very many have had a surfeit of life's joys.

What does the New Year possess for us? We do not know. Will there be sorrow or joy, laughter and sunshine; sadness or tears? The dreadful uncertainty makes us pause at the entrance into the unknown and implore Father Time not to hasten away—to give us one more chance. But, no. We must go forward by the supreme command of Him who made the cycles to follow unhesitatingly one another. Ours now to face the new year with brave hearts and firm resolves and with a courage born of faith. We have the promise of the loving Father that He will be with us, overshadowing us with His mighty wings; Heaven's Fair Queen, too, will unfold us in her loving arms where shelter is never refused those who ask. She will protect us; she will make our offerings worthy; she will cherish our laughter, she will wipe away our tears. With these assurances, can we fear to face the future, knowing everything is safe in their hands.

We come now with the wish that all the season's blessings may rest upon our readers and subscribers and upon all those who, in one way or another, gave us their patronage. To one and all we wish A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR.

CONGRATULATIONS.

We are happy to offer our felicitations to the Rev. Gerald McShane, S.S., upon his appointment as Pastor of St. Patrick's. Though still a young man, he possesses the power to lead, a quality visible since the first days of his ministry in that church, some six years ago, and this together with gifts of learning, oratory and wisdom surely leaves nothing to be desired as an administrator, and gives to the people of St. Patrick's the assurance that they have a man equal to the huge task imposed upon him.

Long years, then, to the new pastor, and may God grant him strength to cope with the responsibilities attendant upon such an important charge.

ARCHBISHOP BRUCHESI DECEASED.

Death has just visited the family of our Archbishop and taken away his venerable mother at the advanced age of 81 years. A very deep sorrow indeed it is to His Grace, whose devotion to his mother was most admirable. And how consoling it must have been to her to have the rare privilege of being attended all through her illness, and to pass away fortified by the Sacraments of holy Church administered by the hands of him who, besides being her son, was her chief pastor. The True Witness asks His Grace to accept its sentiments of profound sympathy.

CHRISTMAS-TIDE SOCIALLY.

Away up in the peninsular part of Ontario is a wisecrack of a schoolmaster—a regular type of pedagogue who loves truth so profoundly that he cannot bear the idea of little children being deceived. He is determined that no such petty fraud as Santa Claus shall be practised in the homes of his school section. He is not going to block up the chimneys so as to prevent the old man's entrance; he is going to pull the mask off the Saint and show that there is not now and there never was any foolish wanderer like Santa Claus whose home was nowhere, whose visit was only once a year, and whose entrance and exit were always by the same absurd, inexplicable route. It is a great thing for men to be wise. But the children might without harm be left to the possession of the dear old custom or resort to their own devices to discover who Santa Claus is. The question goes round the family with a shake of the head from the big brother as if he were into the secret, but would not tell. Realities enter soon enough upon life's career without hastening their stern demands. Santa Claus has the happy combination of uniting supernatural memories with natural favors, and of making age serve childhood with affection and curiosity. Homes are brighter where the living steps rise one after another—each in succession to experience the mysterious visit and appreciate the gifts of the mysterious donor who knew exactly where to find the little stockings waiting for him in the corner. The old schoolmaster should pause before he turns the lurid light of criticism upon this matter. There are other social functions which need his attention much more than this harmless mask. Christmas is a time when religion becomes much more social than at any other season of the year. Christmas wishes and Christmas festivities conform more with the spirit and tradition of the time than would similar functions at Easter. But even so both feasts are interwoven with heavenly warp and earthly threads, which show the happy blending of both the supernatural and the natural. The gifts of Christmas given to the young are but a type of the Babe that was born for us and the Child that was given to us. New Year's wishes bear the stamp of not only the new civil year but also of that new dispensation ushered upon the world by the new-born Christ, the octave of whose birth New Year's Day commemorates. Then Epiphany has its ceremony in imitation of the three Kings and their mystic gifts. In the Middle Ages the faithful used to present on the Epiphany, gold, frankincense and myrrh to be blessed by the priest. Another custom which originated in the ages of faith is still observed in many countries. In honor of the three Kings who came to Bethlehem from the East, each family chose one of its members to be King. A feast was held, cake served up, and he who took the piece with a secret mark upon it, was proclaimed King of the day. Two portions of the cake were reserved for the poor, in whom honor was thus paid to the Infant Jesus and His Blessed Mother. King's Feast and Twelfth Cake is still a Christmas joy in thousands of families, and happy those where it is kept in the Christian spirit which first originated it. These traditions and recreations will die out where children are scarce, where race suicide prevails, and where schoolmasters are over-zealous and over-wise.

KNOWLEDGE OF RELIGION.

The old year, which now is numbered with the past, is rendered historical by the firm stand taken by our Holy Father with regard to Biblical studies and philosophical interpretations of religious subjects. To those who have watched the trend of modern thought the time seemed fully at hand when a halt should be called. Had things gone on much longer the evil would have increased most seriously its threatening dangers. These dangers may

be principally described as a want of knowledge of religion and a false notion of science. It is hard to say which does the greater harm, ignorance of truth or false knowledge. One scarcely ever exists without the other. Just as light and shade mutually exclude each other, so knowledge and ignorance, truth and falsehood do not coexist in the same subject, though they enlighten or darken the mind. False knowledge is more dangerous for the reason that it is more insidious. The poison may be sugar coated. The demon may appear as an angel of light. On the other hand, if knowledge of truth is as wide and as deep as it should be the dangers of false knowledge are minimized. There is an error in the minds of many as subtle as it is deep. It is that ignorance is worse than false knowledge. It arises very much from the fact that there is only one subjective test of truth. It lies at the door of Protestantism, whose first principle of private judgment robbed truth of nearly all its objective value in the world of thought and of action. Men were henceforth to be their own judges and their own masters. They were to make truth as a builder would make a house or an artist paint a picture. There might be omissions in the former but still it would be a house; and there might be flaws in the picture though it might still be a picture. For several generations this condition existed, robbing religion of its treasury of rich thought and superabundant truth and replacing truth with scepticism and religion with philosophy. The state of things is due to Protestantism for another important reason that it got possession of the sources and wells of information and power. Nationalizing in its character and relying upon caesarism for its support it encouraged false philosophy without a thought of its own injury. As long as Catholicism was kept buried and a guard set upon its tomb Protestantism felt quite secure. Literature became more and more vitiated. The waters poisoned at their source began to show death bearing signs in the lower valleys of magazines and journals. Society helped in the same direction. No educational door was open to a Catholic, no profession encouraged the talented or held out hope to the conscientious. How sweeping has been the effect of all this and much more which can never be known till the day of great revelation can better be imagined than described. It has remained for the teaching Church to bring us to attention and to remind us that the deposit of truth has been for some time in danger. The Encyclical shows also the extent of Catholic truth. In his Advent pastoral upon the Encyclical Bishop Hedley, of Newport and Monrovia, makes a very apt statement: "It is a rare thing to find Catholics in these days who have any grasp of the length and breadth of their own religion. This is a great misfortune." That this is a correct estimate of things seems evident from the fact that many did not know what the encyclical was intended for. Some thought it was a false alarm, others looked upon it as inopportune while a third class sympathizing with the advocates of Modernism, blamed it as interfering with science. Whilst these submitted they secretly wished that they had not been called upon to submit. What is the length and breadth of our religion? Eternity is its length and the world is its breadth. It is the love of Christ—His infinite, inexhaustible treasures of wisdom and power and love illuminating mind and charming heart and filling every affection of the soul with purest satiety. Religion is not geometry, made up of bare definitions, axioms, and propositions. It is not reason, seated in the judgment-hall with one question upon her lips, What is truth? and the determination in her heart to decide the matter for herself. Religion is not power of power enthroned in the assemblies of nations and with its sceptre dictating to the conscience of its citizens. It is the humiliation of Bethlehem making the heavens ring with the glory of God and the peace of mankind—it is faith, grace, mercy-giving freedom to the sons of God, and breaking the fetters of sin. No subject can present such charms for itself. Such high ideals for imitation, or afford more opportunity for improvement than the careful study of our religion. Devoted as we are, however, to material matters, engrossed with the temporal demands of life, we have been indifferent and careless whilst the enemy has been zealous. Truth, were it not for its inherent immortality, would have a poor chance against the aggressiveness of falsehood. Truth is mighty and will prevail even though another generation may have to come

before it be duly appreciated. The present generation is sadly indifferent to Catholic truth in its full extent and Catholic public spirit in its urgent needs and great interests.

Immense Gathering in Monument National

Testifies to Interest Taken in Anti-Alcoholic League.

A meeting of more than passing interest was that held last Sunday evening in the Monument National for the purpose of organizing the Anti-Alcoholic League. A representative gathering filled the spacious hall, great numbers of our local men being noticed, among whom we mention the following: Chief Justice Taschereau (chairman), Mr. Justice Lafontaine, the Hon. Mr. Beaubien, Senator David, Dr. Guerin, the Hon. J. A. Ouimet, Mr. P. E. Leblanc, Hon. A. R. Angers, the Rev. Fathers Columban, Ladislas and Ethelbert, of the Franciscan Order; the Rev. G. G. Huxtable, secretary, and Mr. S. J. Carter, president of the Dominion Alliance; the Rev. Alberts Cherrier and Tranchemontagne, the Rev. Fathers Laviolette, Giroux, Ward, Dugas, Lariviere, Messrs. M. J. Walsh, M. P., Judge Sirote, S. Lachance, J. M. M. Duff, Dr. Bernier, F. X. Martineau, J. H. Semple, Chas. Chaput, Victor Morin, L. E. Geoffrion, A. Gagnon, Ludger Gravel.

A unanimous vote ratified the choice of the committee, this choice being Chief Justice Taschereau, as president; Archbishop Bruchesi, as honorary president, and Mr. Victor Morin, general secretary. Judge Taschereau thanked the citizens for the honor conferred upon him, and said he felt he had no right to refuse the task of taking part in the grand national work they were about to undertake. He relied on the support of both men and women. The work before them was nothing less than the raising of the nation, already threatened with ruin and expecting the help of friendly hands. This help should come from the great metropolis which, while progressing in every branch of industry, was also, like all large centres, exposed to the vices and demoralization inherent to cosmopolitan cities. Old Quebec had already given a noble example in that direction, following the generous impulse of the Bishops and clergy.

Continuing, the learned judge said that the first duty was to attack the enemy in his own citadel, and demolish his bulwarks so strong and so numerous in the city of Montreal. The first attack would be on those entrenchments known under the peculiar name of "license"—so called, no doubt, after their founder, license, the great enemy of all true civilization. Those entrenchments were so numerous that they could hardly be counted; and in one of the city parishes there was one for every seventeen families. They must not be alarmed, however, for they knew of a subterranean mine that could, by a single blast, if not destroyed, completely, at least reduce their number to a minimum, if the engineer whom they would employ followed instructions. That engineer, called "Legislation," would follow their instructions, for he never rebelled against the authority of the people's will, and after this first success, he could almost promise sure victory.

Judge Lafontaine, who followed, said that they had to deal with a cosmopolitan evil worse than the plague, famine and war combined. The league, with a view to securing the help of all men of good will, would not demand heroic virtues from its members, but ordinary temperate habits. The fight would not be against alcohol, but against alcoholism. Now, how would the league reach its end? By propaganda, by public meetings, by lectures. It would rely on the help of temperance societies, of educational bodies, from the university down to the primary school.

The Hon. Alderice Ouimet expressed the opinion that the clergy ought to take a leading part in the direction of the league's affairs, so as to preclude the possibility of its assuming a political character. When they would go before the Legislature they must be heard.

Mr. J. M. M. Duff was then called upon to address the meeting in English. He expressed his pleasure to endorse the movement, which had his full support, not only on account of its object, but as being entirely cosmopolitan and outside of all race or creed consideration. Mr. Duff's remarks were received with enthusiastic applause.

After short addresses by Messrs. A. V. Deslauriers and A. Germain, the other officers of the league were elected as follows: First Vice-President, Mr. Justice Lafontaine; assistant vice-presidents, the Hon. J. D. Rolland, Dr. E. P. Lachapelle, ex-Ald. S. D. Valliers and Dr. Guerin; treasurer, Mr. Arthur Gagnon; assistant-secretaries, Messrs. A. Germain and R. Delorizier.

A vote of thanks was passed to the clergy of all denominations, to the civic and civil authorities and to the press for their past efforts on behalf of the temperance cause.

A resolution of condolence was also passed relative to the bereavement of Archbishop Bruchesi, the death of whose venerable mother was announced.

The chairman, Mr. Justice Taschereau, closed the meeting by declaring once more that the movement was not exclusively French or Catholic, but that the co-operation of all honest citizens was expected, and declaring that while work-

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ing hand in hand with the clergy, the league would be a lay movement, as much of its work was of a nature better suited to laymen's activity.

Christmas Tree at St. Patrick's Orphanage.

A very pleasing function took place last Saturday afternoon at St. Patrick's new Orphanage, when the formal opening took place. A Christmas tree was really the principal item in so far as the little ones were concerned. Many friends of the institution had contributed innumerable gifts, and the tree was heavily laden. And such valuable gifts, too—sleighs, large and small, snow-shovels, toboggans, dolls, games, and almost everything to satisfy the child heart. The ladies who had charge of the affair, Mrs. Burke and Mrs. Macdonald, were untiring in their efforts to make it a success. Surely the unbounded enthusiasm of the little ones was satisfaction sufficient for anyone. They clapped and cheered as name after name was called, and a happy face greeted all as the little one returned laden with her or his precious gift. The recreation hall was tastefully decorated and many kind friends were present testifying to the interest taken in the orphanage.

Among those present were noticed the following: The Rev. Father Raymond, superior of the Franciscans; Rev. Father Christopher, O.M.I.; Mr. and Mrs. M. Burke, Mrs. Monk, Mrs. McCrory, Miss Margaret McCrory, Mr. and Mrs. C. Smith, Miss Smith, Master C. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. C. A. McDowell, Mrs. E. Kennedy, Mr. W. E. Doran, Ald. O'Connell, Miss Murphy, Miss Eileen Daly, Mr. and Mrs. John Fallon, Dr. Harrison, Dr. Mullally, Mr. Martin Egan, Misses McNally. A moving picture entertainment was another important item. It did one good to see the hearty manner in which the children enjoyed themselves, and, after all, it takes so little to make these little girls and boys, as other little ones, happy. Their world is so small and their appreciation is always so genuine that it is a pity to withhold from them what helps to brighten their lives and creates pleasant memories to last them a very long time.

At the close of the biograph entertainment, refreshments were served to both inmates and guests, the whole thing leaving an impression of having helped to scatter a little sunshine into lives deprived of mother love and devotion.

MAYO NEWS.

(From our Own Correspondent)
Christmas eve was fittingly celebrated here. The main altar and two side altars were beautifully decorated, the crib was tastefully arranged, the lights shinning forth like so many stars. The Mass was chanted by a full choir. The hymn "What Lovely Infant Can This Be," was sung by the children. Rev. Father Barrette officiated. What would most attract the eye of a stranger was the very large number of communicants; that, indeed, was something to be remembered. The church was crowded, and we feel confident that mostly everyone present approached the Holy Sacrament.

Rev. Father Barrette is making the visitation of the parish this week.

Quite an enjoyable evening was spent at Mr. John Burke's, of Thurso, where a number of young folks from Mayo, Buckingham and Thurso were gathered.

A number of our boys are leaving for the woods for the winter months and we wish them good luck.

Mr. D. O'Callaghan returned from Cobalt on the 28rd to spend a few weeks with his parents here.

Mr. Jas. McAndrew, of Butte, Mont., is visiting his brother, Mr. W. M. McAndrew, of this place.

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