

CATHOLICS AND THE CRIMINAL STATISTICS.

THE *Telegram*, with characteristic indocency, has recently returned to its time-worn calumny against Catholics with reference to the criminal statistics just issued by the Dominion Government. Had it any reputation for honesty or fair dealing to fall back upon we could easily understand how it *might* be led into error, through having looked only cursorily into the blue book; though to make a serious charge against the moral character of any section of our population, without having taken ordinary care to ascertain beyond doubt the truth of the matter, is, in itself, a crime. In this instance, however, we do not hesitate to charge the *Telegram* with having made a deliberate misstatement. As each year has come round it has had recourse to the same despicable tactics, in order to besmirch, if possible, the fair fame of the Church, and notwithstanding that its attention has been called to the true facts of the case by the Catholic press of this city, it has not the honesty or the manliness to retract its statements or to abstain from repeating them.

Now, what is the truth of the matter? The *Telegram* accuses us of furnishing more criminals than all other denominations put together, whereas the reverse is the case. The blue book gives the total number of convictions for 1886 at 3,797, and of these it sets down 1,895, or less than one half, as being Catholics. This of itself, without looking more closely into the figures given by the blue book, is sufficient to refute the shameful slander of the *Telegram*, but when we turn to the statistics of each of the more serious offences, they tell strongly in favour of Catholics, as may be seen by the following table.

OFFENCE.	Total Number of Convictions.	Number of Catholics.
Murder.....	10	4
Attempt to Murder.....	3	2
Manslaughter.....	17	
Arson.....	26	5
Rape.....	18	6
Keeping, or being Inmates of Houses of Ill Fame	119	37
Aggravated Assault.....	131	65
Burglary.....	58	28
House and Shop Breaking.....	104	54
Horse, Cattle and Sheep Stealing.....	57	4
Total.....	493	232

It will be seen by a glance at this list, taken at random from the blue book that in almost every case Catholics are in the minority, in some cases greatly so. In giving the totals of religions there is in most cases a certain number unaccounted for. These must be classed as non-Catholics. The *Telegram*, in comparing statistics of population for the purpose of seeming to justify its aspersion, simply reckons the two divisions of Catholics and non-Catholics. Non-Catholics, it is true, are in the majority, but not to any great extent, but in that majority are classed infidels, agnostics, pagans and others who register themselves as having no religion. It will be seen therefore that the attempt of the *Telegram* to ignore all those convicted of crime, not set down to any religion, and consequently non-Catholics, amounts to nothing less than a mean and cowardly slander.

We are in no sense disposed to deny that the total number of Catholics convicted of crime or misdemeanour of one kind or another is much greater than it should be. It is not to be accounted for, however, on any other hypothesis than that the Catholic population of Canada and particularly of this province of Ontario, is, for the greater part, poor. Poor, many of them, not through any fault of their own, but because of the merciless and grinding tyranny of the rich and powerful, who, hating with a deadly and vindictive hatred both their race and their faith, have robbed them of their substance and turned them adrift on the roadside to starve like dogs, or through their very poverty to drift into desperation and crime in the slums of the great cities of this continent. We refer especially to Ireland. Of the millions of Irishmen who within this century have been driven from their native land by the cruel exterminator, many, by the sheer force

of their innate energy and courage, have risen to wealth and opulence, or have at least become happy and prosperous citizens of the colonies of the Empire and of the United States. But a lamentably great number, and it is a fact which our Bishops and clergy have never ceased to deplore, have, through old age and infirmity, been cast adrift in the great cities, and their children deprived of the blessed influence of a good home, and, left to themselves, have grown up without education or religious training to swell the criminal classes. From this class, the great majority who are classed in the criminal statistics of Canada as "Catholic" have sprung. But, even then, most of these must be looked for in the totals of mere misdemeanors, such as drunkenness, which vice has made such frightful havoc amongst the poor of all religions, and not, as the *Telegram* would have the world believe, in "the highest crimes known to the law."

As to the influence of the Catholic Faith upon the morals and habits of a people, we do not require to go outside our own country for a striking example. In the Province of Quebec the majority of the people are Catholic, trained and nurtured in the bosom of the Church, and according to her an edifying and unswerving loyalty. If any people may be taken as an example of the beneficence of her sway, it is the French-Canadian. We do not here speak of their material prosperity: that is a subject with which we are not here concerned, but no Catholic need fear to court the fullest enquiry in that direction. But, comparing the moral character of the French-Canadian with that of his English-speaking neighbour in the Province of Ontario, the result is overwhelmingly in favour of the former. In an able article in the *Scottish Review* reprinted in this journal, Mr. J. G. Bourinot writes as follows:—

"No class of the population of Canada is more orderly or less disposed to crime than the French Canadian. Indeed, if we compare the statistics of crime in the Province of Quebec with those in the larger Province of Ontario, the comparison is in favour of the former. On referring to a Blue Book issued a year or two ago by the Government of Canada, we find that in 1882 there were about 18,000 people convicted of various crimes and offences in the latter province out of a total population of 2,000,000 souls, while in Quebec the number did not exceed 6,000 out of a population of 1,400,000; and when we come to analyze the returns we see that the aggregate of crime was in the cities of Montreal and Quebec, where there is a criminal class made up of all nationalities. As a rule the people are temperate in their habits, and in corroboration of this statement I may again refer to the authority just cited, from which it appears that in 1882 the cases of drunkenness in the Ontario courts were nearly 9,000 as against 8,000 in Quebec, and of the latter Quebec and Montreal absorbed nearly 2,500."

It would be too much to expect of the *Telegram*, to make any amends for the false-witness it has borne against the Catholics of this country. Such an act of justice and fair-dealing is not in keeping with its antecedents, but it would be not inappropriate for Protestants who chanced to read the article referred to, to ask themselves it, in uttering such a calumny against a large section of the people of Canada, the *Telegram* was acting consistently with the principles of their religion.

M.

THE ANTI-O'BRIEN MEETING AND ITS RESULTS.

THE infamous Saturday meeting in the Queen's Park will go down in local history as a patchwork of Orangeism and Protestant Clericalism. The Rev. and Right Rev. gentlemen who harangued there identified themselves with the hoodlumite faction whose principles are a standing menace to stable government in this country, as they have been in Ireland. It is now evident to a watching world that Orangeism is a synonym for the suppression of every opinion adverse to Protestant Toryism. It is also evident that Orangeism is prepared to use any means, no matter how violent, to attain its end.