

## The True Witness

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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## EPISCOPAL APPROBATION.

If the English speaking Catholics of Montreal and of this Province consulted their best interests, they would soon 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.

SATURDAY.....MARCH 26, 1898

## CATHOLICS AND THE THEATRE.

One of the subjects dealt with at the Catholic Winter School recently was "The Theatre." That such a subject should have been selected and approved by those who organized the Winter School shows the importance which is attached to it as a factor of modern life. The drama, as the lecturer, Mr. H. A. Adams, pointed out, seems to be the earliest form in which literature expresses itself. Students tell us that as soon as a language becomes sufficiently coherent to be used as a literary medium the nation seems irresistibly impelled to express its racial and ethical aspirations in the dramatic form. This rule seems invariable, because it is found to be operative not only among allied nations, which would naturally be affected by any common development, but among all nations. The drama was one of the earliest literary forms among the Greeks; and even the Hottentot, who has not yet learned to write, gives evidence in his picture messages, etc., of the first faint glimmering of the dramatic instinct.

In order to understand how the drama is thus early developed, one should study the play of children. In the unspoiled and unconscious republic of the nursery dramatic instinct exists in its finest and fullest form. Before the child can read he acts magnificently. In this connection the other fact should be remembered, that philosophic enquirers have observed that the drama is always best at its beginning and declines in merit as time goes on. The same is true of children. The dramatic instinct in them is dulled as they grow up; and that faculty which first enabled them freely to express their meanings becomes eventually a means of veiling their thoughts. Thus the little girl who refuses to meet a visitor because "she don't like him," will, when she grows older, hasten forward with every demonstration of pleasure to greet the same individual, although the interval may have made no change in the sentiment with which she regards him. In the earlier stage her actions reflected her emotions; but now she "has that within that passes show." Where formerly she uttered what she thought, she now says only what she thinks second persons think she thinks. The period of spontaneous expression is past, and now her speech is preceded by a brief, unconscious calculation, in which she weighs facts and politenesses before opening her lips.

The drama is only the unfolded cosmos of that which the child's action is the microcosm. As the drama grows older and more self-conscious, richer in vocabulary, in epigram and the power to entertain, it diminishes in effectiveness and truthfulness.

This Mr. Adams illustrated by a review of the history of the drama since Shakespeare's time. A position of unsurpassable pre-eminence is, by common consent, awarded to Shakespeare. This is because men realize that in Shakespeare they find themselves portrayed exactly as they really are. In the plays of modern authors, like Sardou and his imitators, men are entertained by the polished elegance of epigram, and the subtle analysis of motive, but they feel that it is not the real observation of life but merely dissecting-room analysis. The old drama was the theatre where men performed actions, the new one is only the explanation why he does them. After Shakespeare there was a continuous deterioration in the drama, as it grew

more sophisticated, more elaborate, and less natural. Alas! before Shakespeare was cold in his grave it became drunk and disorderly, and finally expired in the horrible nightmare of Wicherly. But there have been strange revivals, such as those with which the names of Goldsmith and Sheridan had been identified, and thus the world had never liked a prophet to remind it of the better and nobler drama that had perished. In more recent days the forum and the studio had recorded continuous advances, but the drama has continued to decline. The plays of today reflect, not what the dramatist himself thinks, but what he thinks we would like him to think. He writes about life what he believes will best fit in with the desires and views of his audience. He will with equal satisfaction write a smashing melodrama for a fifteen cents audience, or a glittering string of smutty epigrams for cultured Boston. To the modern dramatist life is to be analyzed. It is a self-conscious psychological problem. The old ideas of right and wrong action and naturalness are unknown to him. Only occasionally does genius break away sufficiently to remind us of what the drama might be and once was.

Mr. Adams believed that if Catholic opinion asserted itself with no uncertain sound the tone of the modern drama on this continent would be elevated and purified in a very short space of time; for Augustine Daly once informed him that fully seventy-five per cent of the theatre-going public in America are Catholics. Seeing that, next to the Church, the theatre has the greatest influence on the imagination and, through it, on the will and the moral nature, it is obviously incumbent upon them to insist that the theatrical performances to which they extend their patronage shall be clean and healthy, refined and elevating.

## CATHOLIC IRELAND AND PROTESTANT ENGLAND.

That the people of England are fast becoming reconciled to the faith of their fathers is becoming more abundantly evident every year. The thoughts inspired by the recent commemoration of the landing of St. Augustine must have given the movement of re-conciliation a strong impetus. The solid foundations of the old faith were exposed to the view of Protestants; and none of them, save those who are hopelessly blind and invincibly ignorant, could have failed to discover their identity with the foundations on which rests the faith of those who are in communion with the Holy See at the present day. The establishment, too, of the Archdiocese of Our Lady of Compassion for the conversion of England, and the part which Catholics of France are taking in its promotion, may well be regarded as full of promise. The volume of prayers for the undoing of the evil effected by the so-called Reformation is ever increasing and the grace of hundreds of conversions is doubtless being daily obtained in this way.

But the most efficacious agency, under God, in the remarkable conversions which have occurred in England during the past half century, is undoubtedly the Irish Catholic element of the population. Wherever he goes, the Irish Catholic brings his Church and his faith and his fervent piety with him; and in revenge for the burning of thousands of Irish peasant homes together with their inmates, the flogging, the torturing, of thousands more in the open air, the innumerable outrages on women and children, which brought on the rebellion of 1798, and revenge for the centuries of terrible persecution which preceded that uprising, the Irish Catholic has brought back to the true Faith, from which he himself never swerved under the mightiest temptations, half at least of the best intellects and the most saintly hearts in England. This is a wonderful testimony to the strength of the missionary spirit which St. Patrick infused into his chosen people. And that the sublimity of his Faith has lent ardor to his patriotism is witnessed by the world-wide scale on which the centenary of '98 is being celebrated.

## A GREAT IRISHMAN.

The name of Father Fallon, of Ottawa University, is a household word amongst Irish Canadians, especially those of them who take an interest in wholesome and manly sports. On the stage is of the institution in which he is a distinguished professor, as well as upon all who have the pleasure of his personal acquaintance, he has left the impress of a charming individuality remarkably potent for good; and wherever his sphere of duty may lie in the future it may safely be predicted that the influence of that individuality will be exercised especially for the benefit of the rising generation of Irish Canadians.

A lecture was delivered by Father Fallon a few evenings ago on 'Edmund Burke, a Builder of the British Empire'; and, as might have been expected, it attracted a large and distinguished audience. After reviewing the important parts that Irishmen had played in the history of Great Britain, and how greatly they had contributed in literature and

parliament and on the battlefield to the formation of the British Empire he proceeded with his subject.

"The year 1729," he said, "saw the birth of Burke, and the city of Dublin was his birthplace. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and began his great work in 1765. It was at this time that, by his powerful eloquence and advanced ideas, he was so potent a factor in the building of the English fabric. England was passing through a critical period in her history. Four great dramas were about to be enacted. Americans were in revolt; Hastings was opposing India; Ireland was suffering from tyranny, and France was being out-aided with internal troubles. Burke played an important part in the vicissitudes of each. Throughout his life he, on every occasion, advocated the rights of his native land. Strong were his appeals for justice, but they were passed over unheeded. It was but last week that his endeavors in behalf of Ireland had assumed a tangible form in the bill that was entered in the English House of Commons for the relief of Ireland. The American revolution brought forth again the strong utterances of Burke. He entreated the parliament of England to settle the differences that existed in an amicable manner and give the American colonies responsible government."

"Had his advice been followed," continued Father Fallon, "the United States would have been saved to England. The poor, oppressed and down-trodden people of India, who were suffering from the galling yoke of Warren Hastings, met a gallant defender in Edmund Burke. He succeeded in having Hastings impeached. His speech against Hastings in the House of Commons was one of the finest in the English language. Again the French Revolution proved him a friend of good government. His reflections on that event would last as long as the English language."

The gifted speaker brought his lecture to a close with a masterly retrospect of Burke's life and the influence which his work had exerted towards the ultimate shaping of England's power and greatness.

## ZOLA'S SYMPATHIZERS.

It is with surprise that we note that Mr. Justin McCarthy has expressed his warm approval of the course recently taken by M. Zola in regard to the decision of the French Military Court in the Dreyfus case. "I honor the courage of a writer," he says, "who comes out from the quietude of his study to stand up at any risk for a great public principle." Now, everybody, except Mr. Justin McCarthy, knows that it was not courage, nor devotion to a great public principle, that prompted this uncleanly novelist, this scoundrel at everything that Catholics hold in pious reverence, to write the criminal libels for which he has been punished. It was, as we have previously stated, his excessive vanity, and his quenchless thirst after public notoriety.

Here is what the Paris correspondent of a leading American daily newspaper says in this connection:

I am surprised to see how unreasonably strong is the sympathy manifested in America for Zola. I do not belong to those who claim that this talent was bought, and that he was acting merely as the spokesman of an Israelitish syndicate. On the contrary, I prefer to think that he has no monetary interest in the affair, but I also believe that the motives which pushed him were not purely patriotic. There was a large part of vanity in his 'passion for light'; and his past career justifies me in this conviction. Like Guy de Maupassant he has more than once in his course shown symptoms of suffering from that mental aberration known as 'la folie de la grandeur.' With de Maupassant, however, it took the form of servile reverence for rank and titles (the only book ever seen on his study table, it is said, was the 'Gotha Almanach'), while with Zola it runs towards a love of power and notoriety. There is at bottom something of the demagogue in his composition. He likes to feel that he holds and sways the masses. If he had been gifted with a reader tongue, he would, so he himself declares, have plunged into political life; but rather than accept the insignificant role of silent deputy, incapable of shining in the tribune, he has preferred to remain a private citizen, a private citizen, however, who is constantly before the public. There is, in fact, no writer in France so ready to take the gallery into his confidence as he. Every detail of his literary profession is noised abroad—the number of documents collected, the journeys taken, the prodigious labor necessary to the preparation of each volume, his physical pains and his mental disillusions—all are registered, and he seems to walk encircled by a luminous cloud of publicity. As to his own opinion of his importance, we are no longer in doubt, for after Daudet's death—at his grave indeed—he exclaimed: 'There were three literary giants in France, Goncourt, Daudet and myself. Goncourt and Daudet have gone: I alone remain.'

Mr. Justin McCarthy himself takes from his praise of Zola's conduct what ever point it had by adding: 'I have no means of forming any opinion as to the guilt or innocence of Dreyfus.'

We would feel greatly indebted to any of our readers if they could favor us with copies of the TRUE WITNESS of each of the following dates: March 20 and 27, Nov. 13, Dec. 11, 1895, and January 8, 1896

## THE NATIONAL CELEBRATION.

The San Francisco Monitor administers a well-merited rebuke to the Irish societies of its district who bring into their St. Patrick's Day entertainments "the stage Irishman with his infamous accent and slum-reeking wit." We are happy to be able to say that such a rebuke would be uncalled for in Montreal. The entertainments, dramatic and musical, on the 17th, were all of a very high order, as well as the orations delivered on the occasion. The annual procession was more imposing than ever, conspicuous in it being the local branches of the A. O. H., whose handsomely uniformed Knights formed a spectacle at once unique and picturesque.

The secular press reports of the various events were meagre and, as usual, inaccurate. Full and reliable accounts of them were given only in the TRUE WITNESS—a fact which we hope our friends and well-wishers will appreciate in a practical way.

## THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

A masterly address was that delivered at the Catholic Winter School, which holds its sessions this year in New Orleans, by Mr. Henry Austin Adams, the distinguished convert. His theme was the duty which the individual Catholic layman owes to himself and to the society, or, in other words, the social conditions, by which he is surrounded at the present day. It is an unquestionable fact that what we call society is now in a transition period, when nearly all cherished institutions are undergoing severe tests. Existing social conditions are of great importance to the Catholic layman, because of the perils which they possess for him on one hand, and the vast opportunities for doing good which they afford him, on the other.

The perils which confront the Catholic layman in the social conditions of today do not come, as Mr. Adams well states, from Protestantism or its attacks; for Protestantism is a worn-out, effete system of ethics, reduced to the last tenuous thread of speculation, and no longer to be feared. The peril comes from within, and lies in the layman's inability to overlook his opportunities and to neglect his duties. What is needed is the realization of the meaning of the great principle of Catholic teaching, constantly affirmed in every department of the church, by which all things are judged by referring them to the end for which all life was called into existence. How, then, shall the Catholic see the end to which these social movements tend? How shall he know when to take part in them, and when to refrain from participation? Mr. Adams believes that the answer to both these questions is: By keeping clearly in view the end which they profess to have in view. They all assert to have for object the happiness of the individual and of society as a whole. But is that the end for which the Catholic should look? Is the measure of civilization the degree of physical comfort that it has given us? Are we more civilized because we use electric lights and have introduced sanitary plumbing? All these things are good in their way, but a civilization which rises no higher than them fails to answer the Catholic test of civilization, which is the degree in which the individual is fitted to accomplish the end of his existence and to take his proper place in the city of God.

What the Catholic layman should feel is that his faith is the only true philosophy of life, and that, in the words of Mr. Adams, "in all things, even the most minute affairs of daily life, he must be positively either a Catholic or an anti-Catholic"—that is to say, he must be a man of action as a Catholic, proud of his religion and mindful of the duties it places upon him, never afraid to let it be known that he is a Catholic, always ready to act as a staunch Catholic ought to act; or he must be a lukewarm, an indifferent, or a timid, cowardly and inactive Catholic, which in many cases is tantamount to being an anti-Catholic. No matter what may be his position in life, he will find duties at hand which he is fully competent to perform, just as he will find before him perils in the shape of temptations to overlook his opportunities, and to neglect his duties both as a Catholic and as a member of society.

The number of Catholic laymen who succumb to the social influences which tend to make them ashamed of their faith and recreant to the trust confided to them by their Church is, Mr. Adams believes, on the increase. What is to be done in order to counteract these influences? Mr. Adams relies less upon Catholic organizations than upon Catholic individual effort. "Whatever is to be done it will in its last analysis reduce itself to individual effort. If but one man were to realize his duty and resolve to be a better Catholic, it would be a step in the right direction. What each Catholic layman should do is to try to shape society so that it will accord with the great end for which the world exists. The types described by that young

Catholic 'Pole,' Skladewicz, in 'Quo Vadis,' were not yet extinct. Reading that book, one might justly say: 'Borne under the Caesars was the same as the world in 1898.' Petronius still lounges at our club windows. But the finer characters, like the slave Ursus, who appear in the book, are happily also still with us; and the call which is made to every Catholic layman is large enough to comprehend them all."

Some people may sneer at the Irish for celebrating their National Festival with so much enthusiasm, but a greater authority than they has declared that no man can be truly loyal to the country of his birth. Moreover, public men of eminence both in England, the United States and Canada have repeatedly expressed their warm sympathies with national societies. Speaking at the St. Patrick's Day banquet last week in Toronto, Sir Oliver Mowat, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, said: 'The opinion has often been stated that national societies are prejudicial to the growth of a Canadian sentiment. My opinion, formed from long observation of members of these societies, is that they do not cease to be Canadians when they join them. In fact, I have not found that those people who keep aloof from the national societies make any better Canadians than those who do not. On the same occasion, the Rev. Dr. Dewar said: 'Love of country, especially love of native land, is a great principle that has been placed in our nature by the Creator himself. I heartily approve of the existence of these national societies. I think the man who does not entertain a kindly sympathy and sentiment for the country from which he came is a man of little worth.' Lord Aberdeen spoke, as he had frequently spoken before, in a similar strain. It is the men who cherish the memory of their native land who have built up the Canadian nation, and who are as ready today as they have shown themselves to be in the past to shed their blood in its defence.

## OBITUARY.

Mr. Alfred McVey.

In this issue it is our painful duty to record the death of an estimable young Irish Canadian in the person of Mr. Alfred McVey, who for nearly two decades had been associated with the well-known publishing establishment of D. & J. Sadlier & Co. of this city.

Deceased was universally esteemed for his genial and kindly disposition, and was widely known in the circles of our religious orders, as well as in the ranks of laymen.

Mr. McVey, for many years, was a prominent worker in national and literary societies, in a number of which he occupied important positions.

He was a kind son and devoted brother, a devout Catholic and a most enthusiastic advocate of every undertaking having for its object the welfare of the religion and nationality of which he was always so staunch an supporter.

His death, which was the result of some week's illness, was not wholly unexpected, and he passed away fortified by the rights of the Church, and all the consolation of religion.

The funeral, which took place to St. Patrick's Church, where a solemn Requiem Mass was chanted, was attended by a large number of citizens of all classes.

Mrs. D. O'Brien.

In the death of Mrs. D. O'Brien the Catholic community of Montreal has sustained an unusual loss. Though an invalid for years, confined to her bed for long intervals of time, the deceased lady led a saintly, even, it may be said, an apostolic life, so lively was her zeal, so great her devotion to the interests of charity and religion, practising all the time the solid virtues of an exemplary Christian. Her patience in suffering, her humility, her pity, so free from pretence or exaggeration, her scrupulous observance of charity in speech, all were sources of the deepest edification to those who knew her.

Her hand was forever outstretched in charity to the poor; no tale of misery was ever unheeded; no good work ever found her indifferent. In her days of health, amongst other beautiful Christian customs, she made it a rule each year to dress, chiefly by the work of her own hands, five children for First Communion, and at Christmas an old man, a woman and a child, in honor of the Holy Family. Her clear, calm judgment, her quick intelligence, remained unobscured to the last, and she heard with pleasure all that was going on in the outside world, regarding especially the Church and its interests. One of her special devotions through life was to the clergy and the religious orders. She educated young men for the priesthood, she aided missionaries and other priests in a variety of ways, for she had a rare ingenuity in finding out how best to help others. By a happy coincidence she was the parochial clergy of St. Anthony's, but the Jesuits, Franciscans and even Trappists were represented at her death bed. It thus seemed as if her life long devotedness in this respect was rewarded even in this life.

She passed away on the Feast of St. Joseph, whom she had ever tenderly loved and on Saturday, day of consecration to Mary, whose little office she had made it her custom to recite, she received the last Sacraments and all possible graces and indulgences.

Her obsequies, which were most impressive, the music being particularly solemn and admirably rendered, were at the handsome new church of St. Anthony, which was crowded to the doors. At the request of the deceased, Rev. J. J. Devine, S.J., was the celebrant of the Mass, Rev. J. Donnelly, pastor of St. Anthony's, deacon, and Rev. Father Ambrose, O.S.F., sub-deacon. In the Sanctuary were Very Rev. A. Turgeon, S.J., rector of St. Mary's College, Rev. G.

O'Bryan, S.J., rector of Loyola College, Rev. Fathers Devlin S.J., O'Donnell of St. Mary's, and O'Meara of St. Gabriel's. Mrs. O'Brien left one son, Mr. Edward Gehlin of New York, and four daughters, Mrs. McMahon of Ottawa and the Misses Gehlin. The latter have taken a prominent part in many charitable works in the city. The eldest, Miss Mary Gehlin, having devoted herself to the Montreal Free Library, of which she is President, and to which she has rendered incalculable services. The family have not only the sympathy of a large number of friends in their bereavement, but the consolation of witnessing the beautiful end of a beautiful life. For truly Mrs. O'Brien most nearly approached in all the details of her existence the Scriptural ideal of a valiant woman.

A. T. S.

## WORDS OF APPRECIATION

For Our Special Twelve-Page St. Patrick's Day Number.

It is thus our contemporary, the Canadian Freeman, and a number of our subscribers, speak of our special twelve-page St. Patrick's Day number;

(KINGSTON FREEMAN.)

A number of our exchanges issued very worthy St. Patrick's Day numbers. Among them the Montreal True Witness deserves special mention. It was an excellent production of twelve pages, printed on fine green paper, and laden with portraits and matter very interesting to Irish Catholics. A beautiful portrait of Archbishop Bruchési adorns its front page. On the whole it was a creditable issue and reflects much credit on the enterprising management.

Please permit me to congratulate you upon the excellence of the St. Patrick's number of your paper. Besides giving splendid reports of all the entertainments of 17th March, it contains reading matter of great interest to Irish Canadians.

E. B. DUBOIS.

I was very much pleased with the St. Patrick's Day number of the TRUE WITNESS. Its artistic appearance was creditable, and certainly the matter chosen, editorially, and otherwise, is something that the descendants of the men of '98 should feel proud of. Your selections had the right about them. 'The Men of '98,' by Anna T. Sadlier, was food for those Irishmen who are apostate in Irish affairs. '98 in a Nutshell' as an historical calendar, is something worth reading. 'The Bannered Harp,' including some legendary tales of the famous instrument; 'Who Shall Speak of '98?' by Prof. John Kelleigh, S. E., and 'Ireland's Patriotic Priests' together with the eloquent sermon of His Grace Archbishop Bruchési, is a kind of literature the Irishmen should read during this memorable year of '98. If you continue in your good work I have no doubt but your efforts will be appreciated, as it is proverbial with our people to be grateful. The enthusiasm among our Irish societies in organizing for the coming celebration, to pay tribute to the men of '98, is an evidence that their heroic efforts, after a lapse of 100 years, are as fresh and green in our memories as the happy days of our youth.

W. RAWLEY,  
County President A.O.H.

The St. Patrick's Day number of the TRUE WITNESS is a very creditable one. The literary part of the paper is excellent.

DR. BROSEAU, L.D.S.,  
7 St. Lawrence street.

The TRUE WITNESS is to be congratulated upon the excellence of its St. Patrick's Day number.

P. F. McCAFFREY.

The TRUE WITNESS illustrated St. Patrick's Day number is a souvenir worthy of the great celebration of '98. It reflects credit on its publishers.

E. MANSFIELD,  
The Shoelast.

The copy of your illustrated St. Patrick's Day number was such an admirable one that I herewith enclose fifty-five cents in stamps and list of my friends' addresses, with a request that you will forward a copy to each at your earliest convenience.

T. HENNESSY,  
Newcastle.

A splendid number. Exceeded all expectations, the best I have seen.

F. CASEY, Contractor.

The St. Patrick's Day number is the best ever issued by the TRUE WITNESS.

W. E. DORAN, Architect.

The management of the TRUE WITNESS deserves great credit for the enterprise it has shown in publishing such a creditable St. Patrick's Day number.

J. G. KERNON.

Clothier, St. Lawrence Street.

## THEATRICAL MECHANICAL ASSOCIATION.

The Theatrical Mechanical Association, No. 44, of this city, is actively engaged in arranging for their third annual benefit entertainment. Mr. W. J. Furlong, stage manager, Queen's Theatre, is chairman of the committee, and is ably assisted by G. Guinwood, L. D. Thibault, J. Gorman, J. Raymond and George Arless, Jr. Through the generosity of Mr. Sparrow, who fully recognizes the great amount of work done by this charitable association, he has kindly placed at their disposal free the Academy of Music. The date set aside is one afternoon in the week of April 19th. Miss Beryl Hope and her entire company will appear, as will also several of the vaudeville acts from the Theatre Francaise and Royal. In the past these entertainments have been rare treats, the patronage has been most liberal, and the lodge has benefited much thereby.

The Executive Committee of the '98 Centenary held special session on Thursday evening, when considerable business of a routine kind was transacted. They will submit their report to the general body on Sunday evening next.