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# The Catholic Register.

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## Dangerous Modern Amusements.

### Archbishop Bruchesi Denounces Theatrical Performances and Other Assemblies.

In a circular to his clergy, Archbishop Bruchesi of Montreal says: "Theatres and worldly reunions are, perhaps, at the present time, the evils most to be dreaded of all those that we have mentioned."

You will therefore fear them the more. You will avoid them with the same care that you should have in securing the salvation of your souls.

We do not here refer to theatrical representations of an openly obscene character, nor to public balls, nor to certain pleasure excursions that are prolonged into the hours of darkness. Such things are only too evidently culpable. All who are solicitous of their reputation would not for a moment participate in them. We forewarn you, especially, against the dangers of theatres in general and of parties given by private families. Decidedly all meetings of persons of different sexes are not of themselves reprehensible. There are still many times wherein the healthy traditions of Christian behaviour are served.

But such homes are becoming rare exceptions. Do not even those, who would not fail in any of their religious duties, sometimes look to suggest the incompatibility of the world and the World.

Instead of innocent pastimes, sedately attractive to all, friendly and intimate conversations, governed by a respectful reserve, we behold to-day, in a great number of parlors, according to the testimony of prudent and careful people, dances that shock decency, dresses that outrage good taste as well as modesty, discourses and songs of a character such as would not be tolerated in more private circles. In public, amidst flowers and lights, and harmonies, and perfumes that enervate the senses and hypnotize the will-power, without the least scruple are practised such trashy acts of imprudence and such familiarities as would cause a blush to arise were the same things done under the eye of a father, or a brother, or a sister.

We even notice with pain that the habit of allowing young girls to go unattended to balls is on the increase, that it is customary to systematically exclude the parents from these balls, and to only invite the young people; that at times there is no hesitation in treating, under the guise of refreshments, with strong drinks, those weak beings thus left without protection and without any effective control.

What are we to think of morals such as these? Does not conscience impose it as a duty to denounce them with all the power of which indignation is capable? Should not parents, who are desirous of pro-

tecting the honor of their daughters and of their sons, banish from the parties that they give all such deplorable abuses? Should they not establish a holy league between themselves, for the purpose of purging at least their parlors of all that might be a direct cause of evil, an immediate occasion of serious wrong doing?

Let us hearken to the words of a Doctor who, to a perfect knowledge of the human heart united all the glow of sanctity. Listen to the moralist, of whom it has justly been said: "That he is the most holy, the most beloved, and at the same time, the sweetest, the most indulgent, the most kindly one, whose rules are accepted as laws even by worldlings." Hear Saint Francis de Sales:

"The custom of balls and dancing, as it is at present practised, so predisposes to evil, under all circumstances, that it always presents grave dangers for the soul. If you are obliged, by a necessity that you cannot avoid, to attend balls, be careful that the dancing thereat be in every respect in accord with good conduct, decency, modesty, and be on your guard lest you should form a taste for the same. These ridiculous recreations always are dangerous for the soul; they weaken the will power, they diminish devotional fervor, they cool holy charity, they develop in the soul a thousand kinds of bad habits; and, even in the case of necessity, they should only be followed with extreme precautions."

A man of the world, whose words we have before us, appears, on account of his personal experience, even more severe than the Bishop of Geneva.

"I always considered balls as dangerous," he says, "and what has led me to that conclusion is not only young people take part in those assemblies, who have already sufficiently enough to resist temptations that assail them in solitude, and for whom that difficulty is necessarily the greater in such-like meetings. I claim, therefore, that a Christian should not go to balls."

In fine these entertainments, such as the customs of modern society have made them, are always exceedingly dangerous, and more frequently are they sinful.

"If you do no wrong," said Mgr. Dupanloup, who was not a rigid master, "are you certain that others do not commit any, and that you are treated with the respect that is due you?"

"Are you also sure that you can indulge in those dances without giving bad example? and if you are the cause of scandal are you not guilty?"

After all this, dearly beloved, what can we say about those children's balls to which fashion amongst us is shaping itself more and more? We never could understand such an aberration on the part of parents.

"It was doubtlessly considered," writes a pious bishop on this subject, "that the evil tendencies of childhood were too slow in budding, and, in order to hasten their blossoming, this strange discovery was made."

Fathers of families, mothers of families, do you then wish the irreparable loss of those innocent creatures whom heaven has confided to you? Otherwise, why do you hasten to kindle, by casting oil on the fire, the flames of sensuality and evil propensities which original sin has left smouldering in the souls of your children? One day, God will ask of you an account of those souls purchased by the blood of His Son, and which you have cast into the meshes of the demon.

Theatrical representations constitute another species of worldly gatherings, extremely ruinous above all for youth. It is not possible to realize the extent to which these spectacular attractions excite their young imaginations and disturb the innocence of their hearts. Even when the parents are present, and that they flatter themselves that they have avoided all causes of scandal, a subtle poison flows from the stage into the soul of the youth. It is filtered into that soul, thanks sometimes to the aid of a singular precocity, or at the very least to the childish compliance of glance; hungry for unexperienced sensations, and of ears prompt to catch suggestive expressions.

By the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who pronounced such a terrible anathema on whomsoever "scandalizes the least of these little ones;" in the name of your most sacred interests, even here below;



THE HOLY FAMILY.

in the name of the honor and future of your families, we advise you, Christian parents, far from becoming the accomplices of those deadly tastes in your children, and of taking them yourselves to the theatres, to protect them against all such dangerous resorts; be you their law-makers in absolutely forbidding them to go there.

But after the cry of indignation and of alarm raised in the press by the unmentionable abominations, which actors in certain theatres made profession of exhibiting in presence of childhood and of youth—Christian conscience should speak out and make itself heard by people of all ages in life.

In her justifiable rigor, conscience not only stigmatizes those shameful abuses, but condemns everything on the stage that is a menace to pure morals; she denounces that infatuation for the spectacular that at present takes possession of every class in society. We may say that the theatre is our city's great danger of the hour. Do not find this condemnation too severe. Decidedly it does not correspond with the ideas current in worldly circles. How could it? Testimonies of conscience is but an echo of God; and between God and the world there is naught in common.

No; this repudiation is not exaggerated. It is in accordance with all Catholic tradition. It is based on the formal teachings of the councils and of the fathers of the Church, on the unanimous doctrine of theologians and preachers most illustrious for their virtue and their genius. Experience also has sanctioned it. In fact, while in theory it may be allowed to consider theatrical representations as matters indifferent in their nature, in reality, even the best theatres are fields prepared for the easy sprouting of all the seductions of luxury, of falsehood, of pride and of sensuality.

Despite our exhortations, some leading citizens had adopted the contrary view. They had hoped to be able to establish an almost irreproachable theatre, wherein the noble passions and the sublime devoutness of the heroes and heroines of history and of fiction might be offered as examples for the spectators; wherein the short-comings of humanity would be ridiculed and the vices of the human race flogged for the benefit of the moral effect; wherein people would meet to enjoy, at the same time a dangerous recreation and to learn lessons in behaviour, in literary style, and in the beauties of language. These entertainments were moreover intended to withdraw the young people from a number of occasions of sin and of ruin.

Facts soon dispelled these illusions. The same citizens have,

themselves, brought us their sincere avowal and the sadly undeniable evidence of the same.

That attempt at purifying the stage ended in a complete failure. So will it ever be. For theatrical managers always end, for the purpose of increasing their receipts, with one special aim—to draw the public, by flattering the passions, by exciting an unhealthy curiosity, by going a bit higher over rival establishments in all that is most daintily attractive.

In our days, more than ever, the majority of dramatic writers seek only the profits and the popularity of their plays.

As masters of the trade they know full well that persons accustomed to frequent theatres soon become tired of the beautiful, the grand, the chaste. And they seek success in triviality and in scandal. Their dramas become unclean dissertations or exhibitions of ill-disguised immorality, such as the wise Bossuet calls "vain coverings that hide nothing."

Other writers, considerable in number, are corrupt on principle. For these the stage easily becomes the tribune of demoralization and irreligion. With the assistance of actors and actresses, who are unfortunately only too clever in the art of seduction, they cast, by the handful, every species of outrage and discredit upon all that is most sacred and most worthy of our respect—Christian virtues, divine and human laws, the austerity of religious life, the sanctity and indissolubility of marriage, the majesty of paternal authority. Equally do they constitute themselves the apologists of every kind of dishonorable intrigue and of the worst disorders. They draft into their service even licentious tableaux, those fairy-scenes, those ballets, in which the scantiness of dress, the sensuality of attitudes, and the voluptuousness of movements constitute veritable attacks on public purity.

And such spectacles, more pernicious, perhaps, than dances, are presented, in a like manner, in luxuriously fitted halls, in an atmosphere charged with enervating odors and soothing harmonies.

May it not be asked, with a feeling of dread, what can possibly take place in the soul of a woman, in the heart of a young man, or of a young girl, in such a place and during long intervals that are counted by hours? Respect for the holy pulpit forbids our pursuing the examination any further. We, however, can reply with Bossuet: "The empire of all the guilty artifices that is therein set up, under the most glowing tints, flatters the vanity of our sex, degrades the dignity of the other, and subjects both the one

and the other to the government of the senses."

That degradation, that government of the senses, of which the great orator speaks, is the subjection of the mind to the body, the loss of purity, the tyranny of the passions, the weakening of character, the distaste of duty, of piety and of virtue.

We are aware that your attendance at balls and theatres was not prompted by such motives. You merely wanted to be in fashion, to satisfy your curiosity, or your vanity, you wanted to enjoy life, to see and hear everything, perhaps even to make yourself dizzy with pleasure.

But it is written that "whosoever loves the danger shall perish therein." We have a request to make of Catholic journalists; to discontinue encouraging theatres, no matter of what class, by means of advertisements, of pressing invitations to the public, and such reports as their issues publish almost daily.

We appeal to their Christian sentiments. They know the harm that articles of the nature to which we refer can do our population; and especially our young people; several amongst them acknowledged the same to us and gave expression to their sincere regret.

The only objection that can be raised is to the effect that these advertisements pay well and are a source of revenue for the papers. Alas! We know it well! But, frankly speaking is it permissible to aid in the weakening of morals—on the pretext that it brings in a profit, no matter how great it may be? The owners and managers of newspapers assume a very serious responsibility, and it is not by drawing a line, in the same organ, between the business and the editorial departments, that they can expect to escape from it.

Moreover a few have already understood the matter. They decided to cease the publication of all theatrical advertisements. They even, for that purpose, asked for and obtained the cancelling of the contracts, that legally obliged them to publish for a given time such advertisements. We congratulate them, and we trust that they may find many imitators.

In any case, what we have a right to do, in common with every Christian family, is to exact from the public papers, that, at least, they refrain from encouraging and praising those troupes of actors and actresses that are unworthy of any recommendations; that they learn to distinguish between the different theatres and places of amusement, between presentable plays and those that, on account of the dangers they occasion, merit nothing but the contempt of all honest men.

## Catholic Societies in the Capital.

### Interesting Letter from "Rambler" Describing Their Enterprise and Growth.

Ottawa is a city well stocked with Irish, National and Catholic Associations just now. The Catholic Order of Foresters is in full blast, increasing its membership with singular rapidity, and holding court in various sections of the Capital. The Catholic Mutual Benevolent Society is also in the field, having for the goal of its ambition the laudable aim of guarding against want, the widow and the orphan. The Knights of Columbus are in the race. The Ancient Order of Hibernians, whose distinctive characteristics consist of fostering a genuine love for the Old Land, and swelling the membership of three divisions already established in this city, not only through the enrollment of Ancient Hibernians of Irish birth, but of many less ancient who are still in their teens, and who have never gazed upon Erin's lovely form, and lastly, but by no means least of all, there is the St. Patrick's Association which, although buffeted by the storms of more than half a century, is now like a young giant ready to carry on its praiseworthy undertaking. Of halls for the accommodation of the societies already named there are two of a most imposing character in process of completion, one being erected by the Knights of Columbus and the other by the St. Patrick's Association. These edifices, which must add to the city's public ornaments; as they will remain memorials of credit to Irish patriotism and Irish enterprise, and situated in close proximity to the Laurier bridge on Maria street, one of the leading thoroughfares of the Dominion Capital.

It is impossible now, as it will be for all future time, to refer to the magnificent hall just erected by the St. Patrick's Association of Ottawa, without linking therewith the happy circumstances which have led to such a glorious consummation. Some few years ago the presidential chair became vacant, and active efforts were put forward to place at the helm a man of ripened experience. Some gentlemen who knew Mr. D'Arcy Scott better than I did myself, interviewed that gentleman and succeeded in inducing him to accept the vacant position. Mr. Scott attended on the night of election, and after being duly proposed and seconded, I remember entering a wild protest against any young man at that juncture of our affairs being selected for the office. "Hold on," said an old friend of mine, who sat next to me, in whispering tones, "you don't know Mr. Scott as well as I do. He carries an old head on young shoulders. Can't you see that the high forehead which overlooks an intellectual contour is getting a little bald?"

I paused and reflected that the horrible crime of being young which I had publicly charged Mr. Scott with, was one that he might overcome if he lived long enough, and for that reason I would withdraw further opposition. Well, Mr. D'Arcy Scott was unanimously elected, and that moment marked a new epoch in the history of the Irish affairs in Ottawa, which have gone forward by leaps and bounds until reaching their culminating point through the erection of the stately edifice already alluded to, from the summit of which the green banner of our forefathers will gracefully wave its folds on each recurring national festival. Without any desire to speak discouragingly of any of his predecessors in office, I may say that to Mr. Scott is due the credit of this grand undertaking with which for all future time his name must stand inseparably interwoven.

THE CENSUS STAFF.  
There are occasional rumblings of discontent in the Census Department of the public service, which are always sure to find ventilation through the columns of the Ottawa Tory organ. I cannot admire the wisdom or consistency of the man who runs to the Citizen in search of balm for his troubled wounds. Yet there are circumstances sufficiently extenuating when it is borne in mind that this is the only channel through which he can air his grievances. My object in touching on this delicate question is not to criticize the

management or mismanagement of the Census Department at all, as much as to enter a solemn protest against the dastardly attacks which a portion of the Tory press of the Province of Quebec have made upon an Irish Catholic, who has been recently placed in this branch of the public service. Mr. Frank McCale the gentleman to whom I allude, did yeoman service for the Liberal party in Montreal at the last election, and I am not surprised that the Tory Journal of that city has followed him to the Sybold Building. What astonishes me most is that he should be singled out for attack. The Journal man must know that his compatriots are fairly represented on the census staff, as they deserve to be, and that Scotchmen sit around almost as thick as bees on the heather, and that there is scarcely any nationality under the sun unrepresented. Only one Irish Catholic has secured a prominent position and he, of course, deserves to be strangled. Has the Journal lost its reason? Does it not know that there are still a number of Irish Catholics within the ranks of the Tory party who will not tolerate ever so weak an attempt to excite prejudice?

### ANOTHER IRISHMAN TO THE FRONT.

The many readers of The Register in Ottawa will rejoice at the appointment of Mr. Louis O'Donnell to a responsible position in the American Bank Note Office in this city. Although born in Manchester, England, of Irish parentage, Mr. O'Donnell inherits to the fullest that measure of Irish patriotism, which in almost every age, has distinguished the O'Donnells. A man of good ability, of sincere love for the land of his ancestors. Irishmen at the Dominion Capital will feel pleased that he has had a "lift," but much more so when he gets promoted.

### A WELL DESERVED COMPLIMENT.

During the past week or two Mr. Michael Quinn, Vice-Ranger of the High Court of Foresters, and for many years an esteemed resident of this city, has been raised to fame through the medium of a most flattering address and valuable presentation made to him on the night of the 17th ult. As any words of mine would add but little to the excellent report of the proceedings which appeared in The Ottawa Citizen, and which I may say without breach of confidence, is the work of Mr. Vincent Webb, I shall only ask you to reproduce the annexed clipping.

"That the Catholic Foresters of Ottawa hold Mr. Michael Quinn, Vice High Chief Ranger of the Order, in high esteem and appreciate the valuable services that he has performed on their behalf as shown last evening, when at a largely attended and representative meeting in Foresters' Hall, (Continued on page 4.)"



### Sterling Silver Spoons.

In Sterling Silver our Tea Spoons run from \$8.50 per dozen up.  
Desert Spoons, \$15.00 per dozen up.  
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Our \$50 Sterling Silver Chest contains—  
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6 Table Forks,  
6 Table Spoons,  
6 Coffee Spoons,  
1 Sugar Spoon,  
2 Salt Spoons,  
1 Mustard Spoon,

a suitably enclosed in a handsome leather case.  
**Ryrie Bros.**  
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**A NEW YEAR SALE**  
This is a special sale of fur garments which have been delayed in our work rooms by the press of Christmas orders. It is necessary that we move them on, and we intend to do so at these low prices:

- 65 Fur-lined Capes, in cloths of brown, green, red, etc., lined with hamster, white and grey silks and wools, \$25.00, to \$30.00, \$35.00.
- 9 Mink Capes, very handsome and rare, 30 to 33 inches long, \$250 to \$350.
- 36 No. 1 Electric Seal Jackets, beautifully finished, heavy brown with lining, large collars and revers, \$50.00.
- 24 Unbeared Electric Seal Jackets, 22 and 24 in. long, \$35.00.
- 12 Electric Seal Jackets, with Columbia sable collars and large ruffled fronts, \$40.00.
- 29 extra Fine New Seal Jackets, 24 inches long, \$40.00.

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