

THE POWER OF THE PEN.

There is a very true if very old axiom that says, "words fly away, but writing remains." If we should be careful of our expressions in speaking doubly should we be watchful over our written words. On the spur of the moment an evil word may escape us; but it is soon forgotten, or forgiven. On the contrary, when a person writes down aught unjust, malicious, or mischievous, he is twice as guilty as the one who has only spoken in the same sense. He has not the excuse of heated debate, or any abnormal excitement. He cooly and deliberately sits down, slowly pens the lines, probably reads them over a few times, carefully weighs their anticipated effects, and purposely commits them to the perusal of whomsoever chance may have presented them to. On this subject and under the heading "Sharp Letters," the "Church News," of Washington publishes a very timely editorial. While the topic will permit of much more elaboration, still the article in question covers nearly all the points that may be raised. It runs thus:

"The power of the pen is recognized by all intelligent persons. Not every one does not seem to appreciate the fact that its power is not always exerted so as to promote peace, happiness, and kindness. It is really astonishing that so many good Christians do not hesitate to write sharp, insulting letters on the slightest provocations. They do not wait to ascertain whether they are really justified in writing unkindly or whether the one to whom they write

is the individual against whom they have a grievance.

"An imaginary slight or a supposed insult will often put in motion the pens of men and women, who believe themselves to be almost perfect Christians, for the purpose of wounding another. Little do they care whether their sharp letter produces pain in the heart of an entirely innocent person. Nor do they care if it adds to the weight of a burden some suffering soul is carrying in secret. All they care for is to avenge some little slight which a word of explanation would at once remove.

"To write sharp, insulting letters is cowardly, for nine times out of ten the writer would hesitate a long time before he would say the harsh words he is so willing to write.

"We are not placed here to become engines of torture for our fellow men and yet there are many who have transformed themselves into such, and who delight that they have caused much mental agony.

"It would be well to remember that insulting letters do more harm to the writer than to the recipient. While they may wound a sensitive heart, they show the writer to be unworthy of the confidence of his fellow-men.

"A good resolution for all to make and to keep is to promise never to write a letter they would be ashamed to see in print. It would be a good plan for those in the habit of writing sharp letters not to mail any letter that seems to be unjust until a few hours have passed, and then to ask themselves, How would this look in print?"

STREET CAR CONDUCTORS.

In the New York Post, a correspondent has the following to say about certain duties of street-car conductors in that city:

"Street-car conductors," says a passenger who has suffered, "ought to take a course in car-housekeeping to qualify for their occupation. They should be taught that the ventilation of the car is an important duty devolving upon them, and one that should be attended to on each trip according to the changes in the weather and the more or less crowded condition of the car. They should see, too, that each passenger occupies only a reasonable amount of space and thus prevent the uneven packing and spreading out, or the standing of timid passengers while seats are covered, but not occupied, as is now common. Not one conductor in fifty pays any attention to these matters,

and if a passenger asks to have a ventilator opened or that several persons will move closer to make room, he receives usually a surprised stare from all sides as if he had quite overstepped his privileges."

This may be all very true, but we do not think it is absolutely necessary for a conductor to have made a special study of housekeeping in order to fulfill all the duties of his position. At least in Montreal, the street car conductors seem to be all well acquainted with the requirements of their cars, and the temperature (be it in summer or winter) is a sufficient reminder for them, as far as the opening or closing of ventilators is concerned. The fault-finding of the correspondent above quoted is rather far-fetched. It savors very much of a desire to invent a grievance rather than of one to rectify a wrong.

CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS AND SMALLPOX.

After all the severe lessons that have recently been taught to Christian Scientists, by judges, coroners, and other civil authorities—not to speak of Mark Twain's humorous castigation administered a few weeks ago—it is wonderful how these people will persist in setting every law of Christianity at defiance, and, at the same time, doing so in the name of that same Christianity. A despatch, of last week, from Americus, Ga., gives the following account of what has there taken place:

"Christian Scientists of this city are defying the law requiring vaccination against smallpox. About fifty members of the Scientist Church have been arrested for refusing to allow the city physician to vaccinate them, the church people declaring that their faith is sufficient proof against the disease and that they are not subject to bodily ills as are other mortals.

"The city has taken a different view, and to-day a large number of the Scientists were arraigned in the police court before Mayor Hixon, who assessed fines against them ranging from \$3 to \$30 and solitary imprisonment from ten to thirty days each. Five of the most prominent women of the city were sentenced to ten days' imprisonment and fined \$3 each, the Mayor leaving it with the Chief of Police to select the place of confinement. They may be quarantined at their homes.

"F. J. McMath, a leading merchant was sentenced to thirty days in the city jail and to pay a fine of \$30. Many other Scientists will be tried to-morrow. All of the defendants are technically charged with disorderly conduct. They have employed counsel and will take the case to the highest court. The Christian Scientists declare their religious freedom is being infringed upon and that the city has no power to vaccinate them. They say that they will go to jail before they will submit to the virus. The Scientists number some of the leading men and women of the city, and they have raised a fund to fight the law requiring vaccination.

"Smallpox is prevalent in this community and the city council passed the vaccination ordinance, which Mayor Hixon says will be enforced regardless of the faith of the objectors to it."

NARCOTICS AND PHYSICIANS.

Mr. Henry Herzberg, writing in one of the New York dailies reveals a most dangerous state of affairs as regards physicians, the use of morphine, opium, and various narcotics. He not unwisely says that if physicians, knowing as they do the dreadful consequences of morphinism (and other narcotics and stimulants), became addicted to the excessive use of these poisons, purely then every possible means should be employed to prevent the layman from acquiring such a baneful habit. The writer

quotes an eminent physician as follows:

"Dr. T. D. Crothers, of Hartford, Conn., one of our foremost experts on inebriety in all of its virulent forms, startled the State Medical Associations last week by his paper, 'Morphinism Among Physicians.' He showed a statistical report covering the history of more than 3,000 physicians of the Middle and Eastern States, 21 per cent. of whom were using spirits or opium to excess, and deduced the general inference that

least from 6 to 10 percent. of all medical men are opium inebriates."

Dr. Crothers temperately estimates that there are in the United States from 100,000 to 150,000 opiumists; that from 30 to 60 per cent. of insanity is due to narcotics; and that 40 to 80 per cent. of all degeneracy and neurotic diseases is attributable to these causes.

These figures are astonishing; yet not half as astounding as would be the published statistics of the opium victims, morphine fiends, and narcotic victims of Canada, if they could be properly secured. Unlike drink, which inebriates and gives exterior evidence of the indulgence, these narcotics produce quieter, but even more deadly effects. The writer says truly that:

"The abuse of narcotics may be termed a concomitant of modern civilization. Investigators record the greatest number of suicides and homicides by subtle poisons in those countries where intellectual growth is ripest. The province of this paper is too restricted to consider the causes of morphinomania. Suffice it to say that morphine and opium are employed to such excess by laymen and physicians as to breed a large class of physical, mental, and moral degenerates."

He points out as a remedy, the enforcement of the law regarding all apothecaries in the State of New York. The same applies in Canada. After quoting the law of the State, he says:

"That the law is flagrantly violated is manifest from the report of the American Pharmaceutical Association of 1897. It says: 'The American Pharmaceutical Association should put itself on record regarding the use of opium and cocaine. We might as well take the lead and do something in the way of stopping as far as is within our power the use of narcotics. . . and to control the use of narcotics and to restrict the physician's prescription for the sick only.'"

"Yet nothing has been done. It seems inexplicable that so vital a matter escapes public consideration."

Here is a subject well worthy of the closest attention in our community. All who have to do with public morals and all whose duty it is to aid in the formation of the rising generation, should make it their business to find out in how far our apothecaries violate this reasonable law. It is bad enough to have the drink curse to contend with, but the other is the more difficult of the two to deal with.

DEATH OF THE CURE OF ST. SULPICE.

The much esteemed Cure of St. Sulpice, M. Meritan, of the Society of Sulpicians, died on the evening of All Souls' Day. In the morning he had undergone with great courage an operation for hernia. Before submitting to the operation, which was considered to offer his only chance of life, he expressed the wish to receive the last sacraments. These were administered by M. Captier, Superior-General of the Sulpicians. M. Meritan's death will leave a void in the ranks of the Paris clergy. Belonging originally to the diocese of Avignon, he came to Paris and entered the Community of St. Sulpice in 1849. Three years later he was ordained priest, and became at once a Sulpician. His active, priestly, and withal modest

career since then is well-known. At one time he filled with eclat the post of professor of philosophy and moral theology at Autun. Later on we find him professor at the great seminary of Lyons. He was appointed to be Cure of St. Sulpice in 1875 on the death of M. Hamon. In 1886, he was offered a Canon's Stall at Notre Dame, when, on the death of M. Teard, M. Captier, was appointed Superior-General of the Sulpicians. M. Meritan, while retaining his office at the head of the parish of St. Sulpice, became one of M. Captier's assistants, and consequently one of the "council of twelve," which council represents the electoral college of St. Sulpice. He was seventy years of age at the time of his death.

HONORING THE AGED IN BELGIUM.

The other day the village of Heyst, a pleasant watering-place not far from Bryges, was given up to rejoicing, says the correspondent of the Liverpool "Catholic Times." The occasion was the celebration of the diamond jubilee of the wedding of two couples and the golden jubilee of four others, all inhabitants of the commune. Among the jubilarians the oldest couple are each 85 years of age, the youngest each 72. From five of the marriages have issued 23 children and 111 grandchildren; the chronicler is silent as to the number proceeding from the sixth. All the arrangements for the fete were carried out by a special committee composed of the leading men of Heyst. At an early hour the happy folk were conducted in landaus to the Town Hall where they received the congratulations of the Burgomaster, who presented to each couple some valuable and appropriate gifts, after which preceded by the local band, they drove to the church, escorted by the gendarmerie, the police, and a delegation of ex-non-commissioned officers, the members of the municipal council accompanying the party. The streets were gaily decorated, and as the cortege passed, the old people were greeted with cheers by crowds of their fellow-villagers who had all made holiday for the event. A Solemn Mass of thanksgiving was celebrated by the Cure, who in the course of a short address offered his own congratulations and those of the parishioners to the worthy jubilarians. Upon the conclusion of the religious service the six aged couples had a pleasant drive about the village, and were subsequently entertained to a substantial dinner in the principal hotel of the place, the festivity being enlivened by music and singing.

WOES OF AMERICAN SCHOOMA'AMS.

The school teachers, that is, the women teachers, are having a hard time of it nowadays. In the first place, they suffer from general enactment of what is possibly a necessary rule, though soft-hearted folk think it cruel and uncharitable, that when they marry they must give up their places in the schools. Those skilled in such matters say that a woman cannot well teach and be a progressive mother at the same time. So be it. But the school teachers submitting to this rule declare that the greatest of all their grievances is financial.

Public attention was drawn to the fact in Philadelphia the other day that the average rate of compensation received by the messengers of that city's Board of Education was about three times that of the women teachers. In the great city of St. Paul, Minn., delays with the teachers' payrolls, due, it is said, to an inadequate apportionment of funds, has resulted in the receipt by the teachers of pay for only two weeks' work out of six. The teachers are holding mass meetings of indignation and are trying to get their wrongs righted. Similar difficulties are heard of in other towns.

The prolonged injustice of small wages endured by the women teachers of our own city was alleviated, in some degree at least, by the passage of the Ahern bill in the Legislature last winter. Very considerably raising the teachers' salaries, the bill gave a minimum pay to the teachers of \$600 and a maximum of \$1,200. However, the teachers

made a serious objection to other provisions of the bill, which placed long delays between promotion from one grade to another and yet made the promotion abrupt when it did occur. That is to say, the bill compelled a teachers to pass several years in each grade before rising to the next. The teachers wanted their promotions to be more gradual and more frequent. The Brooklyn Board of Education last July endeavored to meet the teachers' desire in this regard by adopting a salary schedule, whose first payment was to begin in September, which was practically separate from and independent of the Ahern Law. The Board held that the schedule as fixed by the Ahern Law must needs be provided for by the Board of Estimate by the issuance of revenue bonds. But the Board of Estimate, the Corporation Counsel, the Brooklyn School Superintendent, and the Brooklyn Board of Education have been so profoundly entangled in finding out how and when the salaries are to be paid that the practical result of the matter is that there has been no legal pay schedule adopted in Brooklyn, and that the teachers of that borough have gone without pay for several months. Indeed, since the Corporation Counsel has flatly declared the now pay schedule to be invalid, and as his action was approved day before yesterday by the Board of Estimate, it seems as though the teachers would go without their salaries indefinitely unless they abandon the now pay schedule altogether and their ideas of bringing a lawsuit to enforce it.

We wonder if the wave of trouble for the teachers is to sweep the entire country.—New York Sun.

A CATHOLIC MAYOR.

We are happy to announce that our good friend, the Hon. James K. McGuire, of Syracuse, N. Y., has won his third victory in six years. He has been elected Mayor for that beautiful and flourishing city, which makes his third term—a most astonishing record, especially when we consider that Syracuse has been generally regarded as a "close" city in the political sense. Mayor McGuire is still a very young man—under 30, in fact—and is entirely the architect of his own fortunes and political honors. He was born in the city of New York, of Irish parents, and, after receiving a rudimentary education in the public and Christian Brothers schools, was compelled at an early age, to make his way in the world, owing to the premature death of his father. How well he has succeeded is evidenced by his success in business and public life and in the universal respect in which he is held by friends and opponents—for he has few, if any, enemies—alike. Together with being a man of affairs, Mayor McGuire is also an accomplished journalist, and was editor and publisher of the Catholic Sun, of Syracuse, before his election to the mayoral office. Furthermore, he is an excellent public speaker, well versed in all matters pertaining to American politics, and is prominently mentioned as candidate for governor of the Empire State on the Democratic ticket. We cordially congratulate Mayor McGuire on his well-earned honors, and sincerely hope he may continue in the path of victory.—Chicago Citizen.

THE MANITOBA ELECTIONS.

It would be difficult to give a fairer idea of the effect produced by the news that the Manitoba General Elections were suddenly sprung upon that Province, than by quoting in a few lines from different editorials—Conservative and Liberal, English and French—which have come under our notice:

"The 'Mail and Empire' has this to say:

"Judging by the suddenness with which Mr. Greenway has sprung the Manitoba general elections, that astute politician views the growing popularity of Hon. Hugh John Macdonald with alarm, and is trying to pull through before it is too late. A few months ago the Manitoba Government announced that the contest might be looked for next summer. More recently—last week, indeed—Mr. Cameron, one of the Ministers, declared that there would be no election until after Christmas. Now a sharp turn has been made, and the nominations will take place in ten days, and the polling on the 7th of next month. There can be no doubt that the high esteem in which Hugh John Macdonald is held throughout the province is the reason for the change of front. A quick campaign is possibly the best card that Mr. Greenway can play."

The 'Globe' in a more elaborate article says, amongst other things:

"A general election will be held in the Province of Manitoba on December 7th. The Legislature which has just been dissolved was the ninth, and had reached its fourteenth session. It was the third Legislature in which Mr. Greenway had occupied the position of Premier, and he is now making his fourth appeal to the people of the Province for their verdict on his administration. There is always a reason for things, and if the cause of Mr. Greenway's success be inquired into it will be found in the perfect knowledge he possesses of the wants and thoughts of the people of Manitoba. Mr. Greenway has never ceased to be a farmer. He pursued his calling for profit just as he did before he entered the Legislature, and as Manitoba is a Province of farmers he need go to no second-hand source for his information with respect to his own people.

"He has been a member of the Legislature since 1879, and Premier since 1888. In that time he has fought many a good fight for the Province. He freed it from railway monopoly and secured the admission to the Province of competitive roads, and although this achievement did not yield all that was expected of it, it nevertheless was the first contribution to the amelioration of transportation conditions that the people of the Province received. That fight he fought with splendid spirit, and yet with a patience and solid judgment that were irresistible."

After extending several other of Mr. Greenway's achievements, the article thus closes:

"During the past decade Mr. Greenway has governed the Province with a calm good sense that has made it respected among its sisters in the Dominion, and we shall be surprised if its people do not hand him a renewed commission on December 7."

However in its eulogy, the 'Globe' says:

"Mr. Greenway has fought all the Province's battles the same way. He possesses the Cromwellian immovability when he believes he is right, and never swerves."

The word "Cromwellian" reminds us that the 'Globe' omits to refer to Mr. Greenway's exploits in the educational arena.

"La Presse" in its editorial announcement of the Manitoba elections says:

"Mr. Greenway, even more so than the famous Joe Martin, has fashioned for the Catholics of Manitoba the hard and unjust position under which they still suffer. Martin was certainly the author of the law which deprived our co-religionists of their separate schools; but Greenway was the godfather and tutor of that law before the Assembly in which he personally proposed it, had it passed, and has since sustained it."

"La Patrie," upon the same subject says:

"We have no doubt as to the issue of the campaign that commences, and we believe in a certain victory for the Liberal Ministry. Good citizens, of all creeds and origins, will feel it their duty to support it, because, during these latter years, it has made efforts to procure for Manitoba order, peace, concord and progress, things all necessary in the development of that Province. . . . We should recognize that Mr. Greenway and his colleagues have shown sincere good will in the settlement of the school difficulties and that their action had been rendered more complicated and difficult by the intolerance of Mr. Hugh John Macdonald and his party."

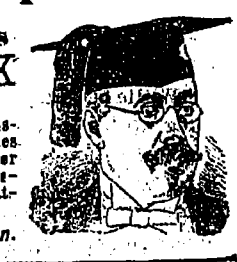
Here are four opinions, each one differing radically from the others. What conclusion are we to draw from them? Simply that both parties are anxious to win and are determined to use any arguments that circumstances may offer them. But the important conclusion, the one really affecting us, is to the effect that the Manitoba School question is still alive and a very live issue.

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