

## Our Observer.

"To keep sport honest," said an American lawyer, Mr. H. McVillen, president of the American Athletic Union, in the course of his speech at the recent M.A.A.A. banquet at the Windsor, "keep it to our boys in our counting houses, and our young men in our banks, and the boys in our stores; let them be the people we have to contend with and then you will have amateur athletics." That is to say, boycott the working classes, and then you will have honesty in sport. It will become the president of an athletic association in a country where most of the crimes of dishonesty—forgery, embezzlement and theft—are committed by "boys in counting houses and stores and young men in banks," to make such a statement, which is as utterly silly as it is untrue.

There were two thousand two hundred men present at the close of the mission in St. Patrick's Church on Sunday last. What a consoling, what a solemnly impressive spectacle it was to see that vast congregation of men renewing their baptismal vows with lighted tapers in their hands! Yet there was a disappointing element—namely, the absence of men who are looked upon as Irish Catholic leaders in that great parish, in business, social and public life. The white hairs of the Hon. Judge Curran made him conspicuous, but his presence accentuated the absence of others.

Our provincial legislators seem to be following the example of the atheistic French Republic in their Education Bill. Their object is to secularize the education of the young. But they will meet with strong, and, we hope, successful opposition.

Mr. W. C. McDonald's recent gift of \$250,000 to McGill University, which brings his munificent benefactions to that educational institution up to a total of nearly \$2,000,000, ought to put to shame some of our wealthy Irish-Catholic citizens who hoard up their money through an over prudent attachment to that species of charity which begins and ends at home. A well-endowed High School for English-speaking Catholics would in future benefit their children as well as their coreligionists at large, as well as hand down their own names to posterity as benefactors of the right sort.

### CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of THE TRUE WITNESS:

DEAR SIR—The point you make with regard to the omission of English speaking Catholics, as a separate column in the Dominion as well as our city census, is very well taken, and I hope you will not relax your efforts to have those omissions remedied. It is necessary that we should know our strength and particularly that others should know and respect it. In many respects we are apt to find ourselves between the devil and the deep sea,—with the great French Canadian element on the one hand and the powerful Protestant minority on the other, and nothing to save us but our native wit, which fortunately is not always lacking. I am reminded of an incident which occurred to my personal knowledge in the Ancient Capital. A very decent, respectable Irish Catholic, who kept a small dry goods store, apparently more for a pretence at occupation than profit,—because I don't think any one ever saw a customer enter it,—had a son, just finished his commercial course, whom he wished to apprentice to the grocery business. He went to a Scotch Presbyterian with whom he had dealt for years but he found that this man got all his clerks from the Y.M.C.A., and they had all to be of the same persuasion as himself. Then he tried an old friend of his, a French Canadian, but his friend had no place in his store for any but compatriots of his own. In disgust the old chap said: "What between the Protestants and the French, there is no place in this Province for an Irish Catholic," and he shipped his boy to New York, where, for aught I know, he may now be an alderman and a leader of Tammany. This is not a matter of slight information. We had one instance the other day, which you, Mr. Editor, very properly showed up, when an Irish Catholic who was entitled to promotion was passed over by the city authorities simply because he had not the requisite pull. We have to pay our taxes and should have our proportionate share of influence in the arrangement of our city and the control of its expenditure.

I notice there is a bet on between the Star and La Presse about circulation. I don't think the general public care a brass farthing which of them has the greatest sale, but I think it would be rather interesting to know what is the number of Catholic subscribers to the Star. I am one myself, and I must confess that when I see the whole side of the paper filled with an illustrated account of a Presbyterian Convention or the visit of Mrs. Ballington Booth and her olive branches to the city, or some other of the numerous religious and semi-religious functions which have not the slightest interest for us, while, on the other hand, with rare exceptions, you scarcely ever see a notice of any Catholic ceremony or discourse, save in some semi-occasional obscure paragraph,—and then it has to be supplied, and cut down and allowed space as a favor.—I am inclined to think our numbers are even less than fourty thousand.

Yours truly,

EDWARD BRIGHT

## OUR CHRISTMAS ADVERTISEMENT

IN HOLIDAY ATTIRE

**ON SATURDAY** you will be meeting your Friends and wishing them a Merry Christmas. It is a time when good feeling and good wishes pervade the human race. It is a fitting time to make presents to your Friends, and a little thought as to what you shall give them may enhance their value very much. For this reason and also to secure as much of your patronage as we possibly can, we place this advertisement before you, hoping that you may be able to make some suitable selections from our stock, which is very large and varied, and our prices are always reasonable and as low as we can make them. Willing heads and willing hands have been busy making everything ready, so as to make our stores pleasant for you to trade in. A visit at this season will be much appreciated by us.—JOHN ALLAN.

### PRESENTS

#### FOR LADIES AND GIRLS.

Brush, Comb and Mirror Boxes, \$1.25 to \$3.50.  
Fancy Gilt Mounted and Hand Painted Brush, Comb and Mirrors, good quality, in plain Cardboard Boxes, at \$3.50.  
Fancy White Metal Jewel and Trinket Boxes, with bevel edge, glass top, 40c to \$3.00 each.  
Albums from 50c to \$1.50 each. Whisk Holders and Silver Mounted Whisks. Glove and Handkerchief Boxes.  
Silk Neckkerchiefs in large sizes for Ladies' Wear.  
Silk Embroidered Breast Handkerchiefs for Ladies, 25c to \$1.50 each.  
A Fine Assortment of Christmas and New Year's Cards, 5c to 25c each.  
China Tea Sets for Little Girls at 25c and 50c, and Dolls, 25c to \$1 each.

#### FOR LADIES.

Beautiful Perfume Atomizers, 25c to \$2.00 each.  
Fine Perfumes, from 15c to 90c per bottle; some of the best makers.  
Fancy Cut Glass Perfume Bottles.  
Flower Pot Jardinieres, very fine, at 50c each.  
Fancy Wall Baskets, 15c, and Work Baskets, 50c.  
Extra Bargains in Painted Plaques at 25c and 50c each.  
Gold Plated Watches, small size, at \$3.50 each.  
Bevel Edge Photo Frames, 10c and 25c.  
Club Skates, worth \$1.25, to be cleared out at 75c per pair.  
Mink Fur Ruffs, Persian Lamb and Sable Muffs.  
Silk Umbrellas, Fancy Plated Handles, \$1.25 up to \$4.00.

#### FOR BOYS AND CHILDREN.

Few Wooden Toy Horses 25c to \$1.00 each. Large Spinning Tops, 25c.  
Hockey Sticks, 15c. Mechanical Toys, 25c and 40c.  
Gaming Sleighs, good size and strong, 25c upwards.  
Magic Lanterns, large size, with Lamp and Slides, all complete for \$1.25.  
Fine Strong Leather Whips, 45c. Ten Pin Game, good, 75c.  
Neckties, 15c and 25c. Mitts and Gloves, 15c, up to \$1.25 per pair.

#### FOR BOYS AND CHILDREN.

Paint Boxes, 25c. Mirrors with gilt frames, 15c.  
Cup and Saucer, in box, for 35c; very neat for boy or girl.  
Knife, Fork and Spoon Sets for 25c; good for boy or girl.  
Melodeons, good quality, to be sold at cost price.  
Club Skates, 75c, worth \$1.25.  
Braces, Trusses, Sashes, Overcoats, Suits, etc.  
Scarf Pins, Cuff Buttons, Fountain Pens and Surprise Bouquets, 25c and 50c.

### FOR MEN, YOUNG AND OLD.

Shaving Cases, \$1.25 upwards, with Razors, Mugs and Brushes.  
Necktie Boxes, Cuff and Collar Boxes, Handkerchief Boxes, Smoking and House Jackets, Dressing Gowns.  
Warm House Slippers, Fancy Silk Checked Socks.  
Neckwear, in all the latest colorings and styles, at lowest prices. Satin Braces for painting.  
Fancy Silk Embroidered Night Robes.....75c to \$1.50.  
White Dress Shirts and Collars.  
Black Satin Evening Dress Shirt Protectors.....\$1.25 each

### FOR MEN.

Linen Handkerchiefs, 6 in box, for.....\$1.00  
Silk Initial Handkerchiefs, Hem-stitched Border, good sizes, for.....25c and 50c  
Fancy Colored Silk Handkerchiefs, New Styles, Hem-stitched, in Royal Purple, etc.  
Umbrellas in all qualities.

### GLOVES

In every make. Wool Gloves, Kid Gloves, Lined and Unlined; Dogskin Gloves, Mocho and Reindeer Gloves, Lined and Unlined; Buckskin Gloves, Fur-Lined Gloves and Mitts, Gauntlet Gloves and Mitts.  
Fancy Vests, Flannel-lined, Newest Designs and Materials, Very Stylish, up to date.....\$2.50 to \$6.50 each.

We have also a fine stock of Fur Caps, Overcoats, Ulsters, Pea Jackets and Suits for Men and Boys, Fur Lined and Raccoon Coats.

CALL IN AND EXAMINE OUR STOCK.

STORES OPEN TILL 10 O'CLOCK EVERY NIGHT THIS WEEK.

**ALLAN'S,** 661 Craig Street,  
2299 St. Catherine Street.

## CHRISTMAS MEMORIES.

The Lessons of Gladness that Come from the Past.

The True Meaning of the Great Day of Days.

[SPECIAL TO THE TRUE WITNESS.]

PHILADELPHIA, December 20.—In the changes which come to words in their use, there has grown to see an inappropriateness in the application of the adjective "merry" to our Christmas greeting. It is linked to our minds with so much that is arch and frivolous, boisterous and laughter provoking, that the sensitive soul is grated upon by its connection with the holy and blessed memories of what should certainly be to us the most joyously grateful feast of all the year. But in the olden time, "merry" meant joyous and gladness, and had not yet taken upon it the coarser and ruder tinge that now completely colors its every suggestion. It is a misused word for those who can go back to its earlier significance, who have met with it and learned to love it amid the quaint surroundings of the earlier poets who sang with devoutest meanings of holy things. It is still a favorite, and sets itself most joyously and tenderly to the heart of a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!" Those old time English singers knew but one Christmas meaning. "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism" was theirs indeed, and there was no fear that they would or could forget why we "keep Christmas," a foreboding that appears to darken the horizon of many of our separated brethren. Serious consultations and much writing and printing upon the subject have occupied them as the Christmas of 1897 draws near, and, really, there is reason for their fear, if what they say is true. All classes and conditions,

ALL BELIEVERS AND NON-BELIEVERS, have been gradually drawn into the whirl of excitement that in the present age has come to surround even the day that is preeminently the Christmas Day. In many quarters, the coming of the Blessed Babe has so isolated all childhood that the unbelieving and carelessly indifferent parents have yielded to a longing natural to the parent heart, and plunge gladly into the delightful tangle of the season so that their own little ones may know all its gladness and its treasures as earth counts gladness and treasure. Unconsciously, involuntarily, they do honor to the day, for all that they do is prompted by that love which the Father of All has implanted in each nature, and which yearns unmanifest and eagerly striving for satisfaction until it finds Him and the fulness of His love. Out of even such an imperfect and barren Christmaside may come the blessing of growth into the real meaning of the feast. But for others, for those who "keep Christmas" in the world and greedy spirit of gain that appears in certain quarters, who count on what the day is to bring them, and reluctantly and quaveringly under cover what it is to cost them—for those there can be no Christmas blessing here or hereafter, nothing but dreary disappointment and bitter apples of discord. The true meaning of the day is lost entirely to them, and there is no softening veil of ignorance to drap their unlively pretence of "good will," and plead for them that there may be for them "more light" upon the path they strive to make smooth for tender little feet. It is only one of the many, many things for which Catholics have cause to give thanks that there is no fear of our forgetting

THE MEANING OF THE DAY OF DAYS.

The least among us and the least faithful to the teachings of the Church know who came to us on that holy night, what He brought and what He asks in return of the children of men. That there are degrees of knowledge none may dispute, and that all do not bring to the crib the full measure of holy joy, and do not get at the feet of the Blessed Babe the overflowing measure of love and grace He longs to bestow, are, alas! truths we must sorrowfully admit, but with each Christmas wish, each Christmas joy, and, too, each abuse of Christmas, there is in each Catholic heart a thought of the Child and His Mother, which brings either a thrill of love, a yearning wish for love, or a sting of regret for failure of love. It is not too late, thank God, for each and all of us to resolve, and to carry out the resolve, that we will bring to this Christmas Day all that we should bring, lest it be our last on earth.

And—to come round to the beginning—is it possible that there can ever be aught but a "Merry Christmas" to a soul that knows the true meaning of the Day? Can any sorrow, present or past, any loss however great, any memory however sweet and precious, cast a shadow over the unchanging, undimmed, perfect gladness and glory of the Day when Christ was born? It marked the beginning of all that is best for us forever. It took the sting out of all hopelessness and fear and dread and pain. It remains with us as the earnest of all future happiness and rest and never-ending joyousness. Then, should it not come to us with a light upon its gloomiest sunrise, a warmth in its coldest noonday, a beauty and a serene glow upon its most lowering nightfall? Let us welcome it thus! "Sursum corda!" Yes, if there is a sorrowful and oppressed heart among those who may read my Christmas thoughts, may it be lifted up and ed on Christmas Day! To such a heart, no less than to the most carefree and glad, as to those who think least of its holiness and those who are blessed enough to measure its fullness of peace, I wish most heartily for 1897, and all time—A Merry Christmas!

HARVEY TRAINOR SMITH