

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.....APRIL 30, 1898.

AN ANGLICAN INNOVATION IN MONTREAL.

The fondness of Protestants who belong to the Anglican sect for imitating Catholic religious practices is well-known—although we do not see much of it in Montreal. In some of the ritualistic or "High" churches in England many Catholic ceremonies are copied in their entirety. One of the Anglican ministers of this city has decided to imitate the Catholic custom of keeping the church open on week days "in order," as a daily contemporary explains, "to enable members of its congregation and others to engage in meditation or silent worship." With true utilitarianism, however, the authorized announcement of the event states that before it was finally resolved to keep the church open on week days the question of the possibility of thefts of Bibles, prayer books and hymnbooks—the only objects of value lying around in Protestant churches—was carefully considered.

"Supposing," the report says, "that the results of opening a special church during the year were that twenty people had entered it for a short time when no service was going on, that five prayer books had disappeared, and that a custodian had been paid to look after the church during perhaps two hundred and fifty days in the year in which no one had passed within its doors? In such a case the utilitarian would assuredly say that this was paying pretty high." It was concluded that the risk would be worth taking if for no other object than "to foster the feeling that the public has a right to enter when it wills, and is not to be excluded by any trivial reason from access to a place of meditation and prayer."

This "open church" movement amongst our separated brethren is deserving of sympathy. The object, whatever may be thought of its attainability, is good. But what incentives to prayer and pious meditation are to be found in a Protestant church? Nothing but bare, cold, repellent walls—fading emblems, as it were, of a frigid and soulless creed. How different it is in a Catholic church! There is to be found the Real Presence, and all around are aids and incentives to devotion and pious meditation and repentance. The sense of hallowed mystery is there. The spirit of true religion is there.

MORE DISCRIMINATION.

Discrimination against Irish Catholics continues to be the rule at the City Hall. On the Finance Committee—the most important of all civic committees—there are three English-speaking Protestant Aldermen and not one Irish Catholic Alderman. This committee has recently effected the insurance of the Corporation property through four agents, two of whom are French-Canadians and the other two English Protestants. Several prominent Irish Catholics hold leading positions in the insurance business in Montreal; and there is no reason why they should have been passed over by the Finance Committee in favor of English Protestants. The most elementary principle of fair play would have suggested that one of the English-speaking agents selected should be an Irish Catholic.

How long are the Irish Catholics of Montreal going to submit tamely to this insulting and intolerable discrimination? In the last Council—that which ceased to exist on February 1st—the Irish Catholics had a representative on the Finance Committee; but no steps

were taken when the present council elected the committee to continue to the Irish Catholics this share of representation upon that committee. The exclusion of Irish Catholics from a share in the insurance of the city is, of course, one of the consequences of this unfair arrangement.

CATHOLICS AND CREMATION.

Some of New York's secular journals have expressed surprise that Archbishop Corrigan should have declined to allow any religious services to be held at the obsequies of the late Anton Seidl, the famous musical director, who was well known in Philharmonic circles in Montreal, and whose sudden death was recently announced. Anton Seidl had given instructions that his body be cremated after his death; and the fact is that the Church forbids, as has been its rule since the question was submitted to and decided by the Holy See in 1886, the customary funeral rites in the case of a person about to be incinerated in accordance with his own autemortem directions.

Amongst the principal reasons which induced the Holy See to lay down this rule were the facts that cremation had been adopted by the atheist Freemasons of Continental Europe as a feature of their pagan funeral rites, for the purpose of giving public expression to their disbelief in the doctrine of the resurrection of the life to come; that cremation tends to diminish the tokens of that respect for the dead which has ever been a feature of the Christian religion; that the present mode of burial has been consecrated by usage since the Divine foundation of the Church, and that it has ever been one of the most solemn rites of the Church. In a decree issued on May 19th, 1886, the Holy Father forbids Catholics to give directions for the cremation of their bodies after death, and ordains that those who render themselves guilty of disobedience in this respect shall be deprived not only of the sacraments previous to their death, but likewise of religious services at their obsequies. This is the reason why the request to have a religious service over the remains of the late Anton Seidl was refused by the Church authorities in New York.

But, like most rules, this one has its exceptions. In cases where, owing to infectious disease, the destruction of the body is rendered desirable in the interests of public health, this ordinance of the Church does not apply. The same exception is made in the case of those who have perished in a conflagration. With regard to those whose bodies are cremated without their autemortem consent the exception also holds good. It may be of interest to add that Hebrews and Mahomedans are also opposed to cremation, and that the Lutheran state churches of Denmark and of Sweden have forbidden the disposal of the dead by cremation.

DEATH OF A BRILLIANT PRIEST.

Those parishioners of St. Patrick's, Montreal, who attended that Church twenty years ago will regret to hear of the death of a priest who at that time was temporarily attached to it, and who, though but twenty five years of age at the time, preached a sermon on St. Patrick's Day which caused considerable comment on account of its rare force and eloquence. Father J. H. Mitchell, ex-chancellor of the diocese of Brooklyn, and pastor of St. Stephen's Church in that city, passed away a few days ago after a brief but fatal attack of pneumonia. Father Mitchell was born on Oct. 10, 1853, in the village of Astoria, Queen's County, L. I. His parents sent him to the village school and afterward to Public School No. 40 of New York. Upon graduating from the latter he entered the College of the City of New York, where he received a good classical education. Then he took a course in philosophy in Manhattan College, preparatory to beginning theological studies. His graduation took place in 1874, and in September of the same year he came to Montreal, and entered the Grand Seminary, where he remained until his ordination as priest, on Dec. 22, 1877. At that time the diocese of Brooklyn, which then, as now, included the whole of Long Island, was well supplied with clergy, and Bishop Loughlin granted the young priest permission to attach himself to the Church of St. Patrick in Montreal, and in that parish Father Mitchell labored with zeal for nearly a year and a half.

The young priest was then recalled to Brooklyn, where he was made assistant at the Cathedral and was placed in charge of St. James' Young Men's Catholic Association, an important branch of the society, which he represented at the convention of 1880 in Washington, D.C. At this convention he was elected diocesan vice-president of Brooklyn. Two years later, at a similar meeting in Boston, he was elected first vice-president of the society, and by reason of President Keane's subsequent absence in Europe, on Father Mitchell devolved the work of preparation for the convention of 1888, which was held in Brooklyn.

This convention was a marked success in the history of the Young Men's Catholic Association, and despite his very earnest protest, Father Mitchell was elected president to succeed Bishop Keane. This office he held, with signal credit to himself as an executive officer and to the great advancement of the association, until 1891. In the meantime he continued his duties as secretary to the bishop and director to the Guard of Honor.

During the celebration of the golden jubilee of Bishop Loughlin's ordination in 1890, Father Mitchell prepared an exhaustive account of the work of the Bishop and the growth of the Catholic religion on Long Island, which was published in book form, and is recognized to-day as a standard. After Bishop Loughlin's death the priests of the diocese of Brooklyn, in conclave assembled, selected Father Mitchell as their first choice for Bishop. His name was sent to Rome as dignitarius, while Vicar General McNamara was dignior, next worthy, and Father Martin Carroll, dignus, worthy. When Rome named the private secretary of Archbishop Corrigan, Mgr. McDonnell, as the Bishop of Brooklyn, Father Mitchell loyally acquiesced in the choice. Appreciating his ability, Bishop McDonnell appointed Father Mitchell chancellor of the diocese, and pastor of St. John's chapel, which office he ably filled until the Bishop last January appointed him pastor of St. Stephen's to succeed the late Father Kilahy.

Those who learned to esteem and love Father Mitchell during his eighteen months' sojourn at St. Patrick's will not be surprised to read the eloquent tribute paid to his memory by the Irish World:—

"A man of noble qualities, a scholar and a true priest, Father Mitchell's influence for good extended to the bounds of the diocese and beyond. As chancellor of the diocese he conducted the business affairs of the church in a manner which contributed very largely to its material progress. As a pastor he placed himself in closest touch with the members of his flock. To the bedside of the sick he brought consolation, hope and resignation, and to the homes of the poor he brought cheerfulness and bodily comforts. In the wider field of charity his influence was potent in the promotion of orphan asylums, homes for the aged poor, and organized relief associations. With his many cares and responsibilities, he found time to take an active and fruitful interest in literary work, particularly as President of the Long Island Catholic Historical Society, whose archives bear many testimonials to his learned zeal and patient research."

Rev. Father Martin Callaghan represented St. Patrick's at the funeral.

QUEBEC IRISHMEN'S TRIBUTE.

With characteristic devotion and loyalty to the prelates of that divine faith in whose cause they have fought and suffered with a heroism consecrated by ages, the Irish Catholics were conspicuous amongst those who assembled in the Quebec Basilica last week to felicitate Archbishop Begin on his formal enthronement as the successor to the See made vacant by the death of Cardinal Taschereau, as they had been conspicuous on the previous day in paying the last sad tribute to the deceased prince of the Church. The address was signed by the rector and trustees of St. Patrick's Church, Quebec—the trustees being Messrs. Felix Carbray, John Sharples, D. D. O'Meara, Edward Foley, and L. J. Gilmartin—and read, in part, as follows:—

In unison with every other portion of your flock, we hasten to lay before you the expression of our joy and gladness on the occasion of your advent to the high and honorable post of Archbishop of the grand old diocese of Quebec—the cradle of the Catholic Church on the American continent.

From Quebec the blessings of our Holy Faith have been spread and carried to all the people of the North American continent by the zealous and holy apostles, whose names adorn the history of our country, and will live for ever in the hearts of succeeding generations.

From the days of the noble and saintly Bishop Laval de Montmorency down to our own days, the Episcopal seat of the Diocese of Quebec has been filled by illustrious prelates, who vied with each other in their loyalty to the Vicar of Christ and His Church, and of heroic and self-sacrificing devotion to their flock. Not the least illustrious occupant of that seat was the saintly and devoted Cardinal Taschereau, whose recent loss we so deeply deplore. Never can we, Irish Catholics, forget his noble ministrations to the plague-stricken Irish emigrants of '47, in which he nearly paid the penalty of his life. He has gone to the better land, to there receive the great reward due to his saintly labors, at the hand of that God whose cause he so faithfully served on earth. To his loving forethought for the future care of his flock we owe it that we have to-day, in the person of Your Grace, a most worthy and fitting suc-

cessor—and a prelate who has already given the most brilliant guarantees of his ability and fitness to continue the proud and illustrious traditions of his predecessors in the Episcopal See of Quebec.

We hail your advent with joy, and be assured, that, as always, you will find no portion of your flock more devoted, more submissive and more loyal and faithful than your Irish Catholic children of this city and of every other part of your Arch-diocese.

There is a true Hibernian ring about these sentences, expressive as they are of the devotedness and fidelity of the sons of a far-off nation which was recently described by the Sovereign Pontiff as the most Catholic people in the world. Ireland has won many noble titles from saints and sages in the past; but this one that has been conferred upon her by Leo XIII. is the highest and noblest of them all.

A NOTABLE CONVERSION.

Were the subject of a less solemn character it might be termed the "irony of fate" that the daughter of the notoriously bigoted Orange leader, Mr. William Johnston, M.P., of Ballykilleg, has been received into the Catholic Church. On Easter Sunday Miss Johnston, who is described by the Ulster Examiner, of Belfast, as "a highly accomplished young lady," who is dearly loved by her father, was formally received into the Church by the Rev. J. F. McCauley, in St. Patrick's Memorial Church, Downpatrick. Her conversion was not, it is stated, unexpected, as she had been attending Catholic services some time before she decided to abjure the errors of Protestantism. The member for South Belfast has made no public pronouncement yet on his daughter's conversion, but he has doubtless been keenly affected by the event. Mr. Johnston paid a visit to "the brethren" in Montreal about six years ago, when he delivered a characteristic address.

WORK FOR CATHOLIC LADIES OF LEISURE.

An association has been formed in Manchester, England, which ought assuredly to have its counterpart in Montreal. It is called the Association of Ladies of Charity, and was founded last year with the approval and blessing of the Catholic bishop in whose diocese the great centre of the Lancashire cotton district is situated. In a report upon the organization which he has just issued, Canon Richardson, who takes a deep interest in the movement, gives his views of the very useful services which may be rendered to the Church and to their co-religionists by Catholic ladies who have the leisure to engage in charitable work, of whom there is no lack in Montreal.

This Lay Association of Ladies of Charity has been called into existence by a recognition of the growing necessity of a closer intercourse between Catholic ladies of refinement and leisure and the working women and girls in our large cities. The first duty which they are called upon to perform is a house to house visitation of the dwellings of the poor. In these abodes they will find plenty of scope for their noble efforts. They can bring consolation to the needy and the afflicted; they can pour the balm of kindness upon the sorrow-stricken heart; they can rescue the fallen, and save from falling many a girl or woman sorely tried by poverty and temptation; they can brighten and elevate the homes of the poor, no matter how humble or lowly they may be. As Canon Richardson says, "The Lady of Charity must make an entrance during a time of passing sickness or trouble, and, having once established a friendship, keep it up. It is an alarming fact that the poor, in spite of improved education, do not recognize the responsibilities of marriage and parentage, and the tendency of the present day is to minimize these responsibilities in a most dangerous way. The spread of divorce, the facilities for relieving parents of the duty of educating or even clothing their children; the opening out of means of club rather than home life, the forgetfulness of the constant service of God and of family worship, not to speak of crimes that it is not the province of this report to combat, are all tending to lower the position of husband and wife, and of parents and children. As far as our people are concerned, these evils are to be met by a supernatural character being infused into their ordinary lives. A Lady of Charity can help more than anyone to infuse this character, not by preaching or lecturing, but by being supernatural herself. There is also another reason for the constant visitation of the houses of the poor, and that is to keep before them the Christian idea of home and of family life. The tendency of the present day is to minimize the home, and, consequently, parental responsibility."

As the Bishop of Salford points out in a letter to the Canon, the time of the priest in the larger missions is almost exclusively occupied with the services of the Church, with schools, and with

administering the sacraments to the dying; and owing to this constant strain upon the priests, the members of the congregations have little opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with one another, the result being a deplorable absence of social intercourse and mutual helpfulness. In the course of their visitations, ladies with leisure at their command could remedy this state of things, together with their other good work. The Association of Ladies of Charity could, as will be seen, become a valuable auxiliary to our clergy.

THE '98 CELEBRATIONS.

Preparations for the celebration of the Centenary of '98 are going on apace in Ireland. Quite recently Mr. John Dillon, M.P., addressed no fewer than three large and enthusiastic gatherings of Irish priests and laymen on the subject, one in Tyrone, another in Belfast the same evening, and the third in Glasgow on the following day. Letters regretting their inability to attend, and expressing their hearty sympathy with the movement, were read from Mr. John E. Redmond and Mr. Timothy M. Healy, which in itself is an event calculated to cheer the Nationalists in their strife for liberty, and to teach them to unite. Resolutions were passed unanimously at each of the meetings reaffirming the principles for which the heroes of '98 sacrificed their lives, and reasserting the claim of Ireland to nationhood.

The series of meetings of which these three formed a part are being held, as Mr. Dillon said at the Tyrone meeting, to honor the memory of the men who a hundred years ago fought and bled for Ireland's freedom. "You are assembled," he said, "for two reasons: in the first place to show the world, although these men failed at the time and were beaten, you reverence them, and regard them as men whose names should be honored in the annals of Ireland; because though defeated their fight was a glorious one, for they never turned their backs on their foes, and when scattered and defeated thousands of them who survived those dark and evil days, driven from the land of their fathers to Europe, sanctified the battlefields of Europe by their illustrious deeds, so that not only here in Ireland, but in Spain and France, in far-away Russia and Prussia, Austria and Italy, amidst the passes of the Alps, never has there been a battlefield where you will not find recorded the names of those illustrious exiles who were denied the right of fighting for the land that gave them birth. It is because you honour the memory of those men, and secondly because you honour their principles, and because you and all who are here to-day feel in your innermost hearts that although they died and passed away, they have left to us principles and a cause that can never pass away, and which has been handed down to us from generation to generation, who in one shape or another have maintained the same struggle which we will, please God, be faithful to, and hand down to those who come after us, so that, although it may lie in the mouths of Englishmen or of English Governments to say that they hold by the strong hand the liberties of Ireland, it never can lie in the mouths of Englishmen or of English Governments or of any Government in the world to say they have conquered the hearts of the people of Ireland. They can never say that they have tamed this race, which never allowed any stranger to govern it without giving trouble, and never will, or that they have succeeded in rooting from the minds and hearts of the people of Ireland those principles of civil and religious liberty for which the United Irishmen laid down their lives."

An encouraging feature of these '98 demonstrations is the fact that the glorious historical spectacle which they serve to bring clearly before the minds of Irishmen is having the effect of enabling them to realize the folly of tolerating divisions in the Nationalist ranks any longer. The two separate organizations formed in Dublin for carrying out the Centenary celebrations and welcoming the large number of visitors of Irish blood who will arrive in a few weeks from all parts of the habitable globe, have already reached an agreement to act in unison. This is, it is to be sincerely hoped, the precursor of unity in a broader sense amongst Irish nationalists of all shades of opinion.

The Toronto press speaks as follows of Miss Teesa McCallum, Canada's greatest humorist and dramatic reader:—
"Received a perfect ovation of applause."—Toronto Mail and Empire.
"Scored a triumph."—Toronto World.
"Possessed of great dramatic power."—Toronto Globe.
Karn Hall, Monday evening, May 2nd, under the auspices of Clan Gordon, 71, O.S.C.
Reserved seats 50c and 25c.

It was in Maine that an outspoken parson of the old school prayed: "O Lord, have compassion on our bewildered Representatives and Senators. They have been sitting and sitting; and have hatched nothing."—O Lord, let them arise from their nests and go home, and all praise shall be Thine."

ECHOES FROM OTTAWA

Mr. M. J. F. Quinn, M.P., of Old Montreal Centre, Delivers a Spirited Speech.

Irish Representation in the Cabinet Referred to in a Patriotic Manner—The Dismissal of Mr. Tennant also Discussed—Rumors of an Important Appointment for Montreal's Great Irishman, Hon. James McShane.

OTTAWA, April 28.

It is but a few days since the TRUE WITNESS raised its voice with unobscured sound regarding the ways by which the Irish Catholic population was being defrauded gradually of what rights they had in the matter of patronage. The TRUE WITNESS at that time spoke in trumpet tones. The immediate cause then was the peculiar action taken by the Harbor Commissioners in the dismissal of two men who had been long and faithful servants, without the shadow of a cause for such an action being taken. It was very plain to anybody who gives the matter a thoughtful consideration that nationality and religion were two hidden obstructions in the way. These had been dredged up there was comparatively easy sailing for the men who piloted the good ship "Harbor Commissioner," and there was given a splendid opportunity to ship a new crew by degrees. Another instance of a very similar nature was brought up in the House of Commons by Mr. M. J. F. Quinn. It was the case of the dismissal of J. F. Tennant from the sub-commissionership of customs at Gretna, Manx. Here again was the old trouble made apparent. He was an Irishman and a Catholic, and he must perforce go, notwithstanding that all the trumped-up charges made against him were irretrievably answered. But the Ministry had no answer to make. Without reference to politics, Mr. Quinn went straight to the point, and took for his text a paragraph, now celebrated both for its sturdiness and malignity, which recently found its way in the paper presumably controlled by the Hon. Mr. Tarte. After making an editorial from THE TRUE WITNESS on the subject, and referring to the glorious deeds of the Irish soldiery in France, whose infantry was impregnable and whose dragoons were irresistible, Mr. Quinn clinched his case by saying:—

"When I see respectable journalists, men of education and experience, in the public newspapers of this country, boldly charging that in such cases as the one of which I am speaking, the dismissal was made, not because the man was guilty of any infraction of the law, or of neglecting his duties, but solely because he was an Irish Catholic, I must confess that it raises a doubt of mind as to the sincerity or the honesty of the gentleman who operated for his dismissal. There is another peculiarity about this matter, Sir. In all Governments that have existed in the Dominion of Canada since 1867, the English speaking Catholic people of this country have been represented, at least by one member, very often two, sometimes by as many as four. The reason of that is not far to seek. It has been debated in this House before. It has been spoken of by such men as McCrete, Devlin, Curran and Ryan, my predecessors in the constituency which I have the honour to represent. But what do we see in this Government? It is true, there is an English-speaking Catholic there, a very respectable octogenarian; but I do not think he would be called a man possessing the vigour necessary to defend the rights of his people, or to stand up for their cause when attacked. We have not anybody else except the Secretary of State (Mr. Scott) in this Government. We have had two hon. gentlemen sitting on the door mat, outside the Cabinet, for some time, in company with the Solicitor General, but the door was opened for these two hon. gentlemen, and they were let in, while the Irish Catholic representative is still standing on the mat outside and very likely to stand there so long as this Liberal Government continues in office. Is it to be wondered at that wholesale dismissals of Irish Catholics should take place, when the door of the Cabinet is closed in the face of the Solicitor General (Mr. Fitzpatrick), who would be able to defend his compatriots and co-religionists if he were in the Cabinet?"

Here is a plain, straightforward statement in which even the most ardent partizan could with difficulty find a political animus.

The rumored appointment of Hon. James McShane to the office of harbor master and collector of tolls on Lachine Canal was received here with as much enthusiasm as it undoubtedly was in Montreal. It is said that both offices will be united under one department of which Hon. Mr. McShane is to be the head. This gentleman has always been a striking personality and a most popular one, and no matter how high the position he occupied he always remembered that he was an Irish Catholic first, and an all the time. Whether he filled an aldermanic seat, the civic throne, a constituency in the House of Commons, or held the portfolio of public works in the Provincial Government, his magnetism, his popularity and his *sobriquet* never forsook him. He was always the "People's Jimmy," and now he is the subject of many and heartfelt congratulations from his friends in Ottawa, who have known him as a public man for over a quarter of a century.

NENAGH BOY.

There is considerable speculation regarding the benefits which the war may confer upon St. John's. The extent of benefit is problematical, but the rise in flour, the decline in the demand for lumber, the loss of coasting business, the shutting down of mills and the advance in ocean freights are part of an array of facts that almost any citizen can perceive.—St. John Sun.