

The True Witness

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 1896

A WORD TO OUR READERS.—Readers will help THE TRUE WITNESS materially by dealing with those who advertise in its columns. The Catholic population of Montreal should patronize those who tend aid in building up the business of their favorite paper.

QUEBEC AND MANITOBA

Some time ago a great outcry was made, because one of the dignitaries of the Catholic Church, in the Maritime Provinces, was alleged to have characterized the work of certain politicians as having been inspired by Satan. Looking at the devices that are being used at the present moment, to arouse hatred and kinle the flame of sectarian bitterness and bigotry, it is difficult to ascribe to any other source than a satanic one the inspiration that impels men to adopt such means. The latest development, in the sense indicated, is manifested in the articles and interviews of the Daily Witness on the School Question. With a perversity, that can scarcely be realized, this journal has set itself to work to impress upon the people of Canada that the Protestant minority in this province is not only subject, in the matter of education, to injustice, but to actual outrage. To credit our contemporary would be to admit that the Catholic minority in Manitoba have a heavenly bed compared with the ill-treatment that is the lot of our separate brethren in this Catholic province. In order to justify the position taken, reference is made to the fact that under the existing law, which was made at the request of the Protestant minority, it may happen that in certain cases Protestant populations may be called upon to pay their taxes in some very few localities to Catholic schools, and even in such cases they have a remedy as pointed out in the article of the Montreal Gazette, reproduced in these columns. It has just been observed that the position of the Protestant minority is that made for them under laws passed at their own request. Never in the history of the Province of Quebec, since Confederation in 1857, has a sacrilegious hand been placed upon the rights of the minority, in the legislature of our Province. Never has an appeal been made in vain to that Legislature for an amendment to the Separate School law of the Protestant minority. On the contrary, the spirit animating the Catholic majority then and now was, and is, to do ample justice to any demand that is put forth by the representatives of that minority. The laws as they stand were as near perfection as it was possible to make them when they were enacted. It was hoped they would give the most complete satisfaction to our Protestant neighbors; we believe they are just laws, but if anything be needed to amend them the remedy is at their hand. No one wishes to perpetrate or perpetuate any injustice. The wisdom of the framers of Confederation secured to the minority in this Province such representation on the floor of our Legislature as to enable them to make known their wishes. The daily Witness speaks of "outrages on Protestants." Will that journal mention on its instance, in which the Protestant minority in this province have appealed to the Catholic majority in the Legislature for an amendment in which they were met by a refusal? Will the daily Witness point out that any inequality in the present law, has ever been signalled by a single representative of the minority, and that the appeal has

been met by a denial of justice, or by the statement that the majority of the people of the province are unfavorable to any change in the system? Will our contemporary show that a law has been passed affecting the community generally, where, despite the protests of the Protestant minority, that whole section of the people has been obliged to pay for Catholic schools and been forced to support their own educational establishments into the bargain? Will it be kindly pointed out to us when a Protestant school-house has been confiscated, when a curriculum of either secular or religious training has been imposed upon them against their will and made known, with equal emphasis, by their clergy and people? The wretched attempt now being made to divert attention from the true issue, and to blind people who do not or who will not think, into the belief that there is any comparison between the position of the Catholics of Manitoba and the Protestants of Quebec, as regards their treatment by the Legislatures of their respective Provinces, is beneath the contempt of honest men. The Catholics of Manitoba have appealed, and appealed in vain, to their Legislature. When we ask again, has the minority in this Province been subjected to such infamous treatment as that meted out to our people under the Greenway administration, with the hearty approval of the Daily Witness and all its adherents? It is the ardent desire of every Catholic in this Province, that the most ample justice be done to the minority. To have peace, progress and prosperity, it is necessary that no grievances be allowed to exist. If the Daily Witness will get any member of the Legislature to bring forward a demand for redressing any wrong that may be found under the present law, it may count upon the warm and energetic support of this paper to forward such demand. There will be no need of setting the country aflame, for with time-honored alacrity the majority at Quebec will hasten to set matters right; but in the name of our common Christianity let the lying and slanderous appeals that are being made cease.

SOME SAMPLES OF UNFAIRNESS.

The comments of some of the members of the Presbyterian Synod of Montreal on the teachers and teaching of the Separate Schools in this province, were manifestly unjust. Mere conjectures, moreover, or data confessedly imperfect and almost of necessity pre-cluded, were made the basis for a superstructure of argument which, again, was unmounted by deductions that seemed to favor with educated men. Perhaps the following extract from the report of the proceedings of the 13th in., published in the Daily Witness of the same date, may serve as a fair sample of the facts, the logic and the spirit of the Synod's side of the controversy.— Dr. Scribner admitted that Protestant education, within the Province of Quebec, is far from what it ought to be. This is partly accounted for by the fact that the low condition of Roman Catholic education reacted upon that of the Protestants. The so-called education of that Church was but a dead weight. The Rev. D. Currie asked whether the children of Protestants, who had no alternative but to attend Roman Catholic schools in this province, were compelled to study Roman Catholic books. Dr. Scribner supposed that they were compelled to study the Catechism and lives of the saints. "As a matter of fact, there is very little else to study." (Laughter.) Other members reported facts and places where the condition of things in the Roman Catholic villages was deplorable in the extreme. And yet this is the state of things which the Church of Rome is trying to force upon the Province of Manitoba. Dr. Scribner had been reading a report on education, based avowedly on the statements and figures presented in the annual report of the Department of Public Instruction. The words of his that we have quoted occur at the close of his report. We need hardly say that, while we deem it our duty to defend principles, in discussing this as well as other questions, it has never been the role of the TRUE WITNESS to be the advocate or special pleader of any system. While, for instance, we hold that religious teaching is an essential part of Christian Education, we also hold that it is a sine qua non of the progress and prosperity of Canada, and of every province, county, township and parish within its bounds, that Catholic, equally with non-Catholic, children should have the very best instruction in all the branches of knowledge which it is good for them to acquire and that the best available teachers of our faith can give them. Now, in England, as our readers are aware, they have had a controversy substantially like our own. The main difference is that, whereas the dividing line here is drawn between Catholics and Protestants, in England the defenders of religious teaching in day schools are composed not only of Roman Catholics, but of Anglicans and some other denominations of smaller numerical influence. What these believers in Christianity maintain, then, and have urged as the most forcible plea, is that

they see no reason why the addition to the subjects taught of just enough dogmatic teaching to enable the pupils to give a reason for the faith that they profess and to have a firm and unshifting groundwork of moral conviction, should render less efficient the instruction imparted on other subjects. Nor did they see why other things being equal, their religious should make their secular teaching unworthy of confidence and of state support. And, as our readers are aware, after due inquiry and deliberation, their claim has been triumphantly recognized by an act which will modify—especially in the direction indicated—the settlement of 1870. And this is just (as to its central principle) the education that Dr. Scribner calls "a dead weight." As to the Rev. Dr. Currie's insidious charge of proselytizing, we may be sure that, if there were any truth in it, we should have heard of it long before to-day. It is impossible to be a sincere Christian without wishing to have the church's glorious privileges shared with others. To that sentiment Christendom owes, under its Divine Master, its wondrous growth. But when Protestant boys or girls are sent to Catholic institutions to gain knowledge or to learn accomplishments, the understood pledge that, without the desire or permission of parents or guardians, no new religious tenets shall be taught them, is not violated. The point is one on which a good deal might be said, but at present we need only remark that it is one as to which silence on the Synod's part would have been more discreet than insinuations. But there is an observation of Mr. Scribner's which we cannot pass without a word of stricture. After replying to Dr. Currie that he supposed they (Protestant pupils) had "to study the Catechism and the Lives of the Saints," he added a rider which brought down the house. "As a matter of fact there is very little else to study." Well, certainly if these two subjects were entrusted to the most learned of our Catholic divines and in every school it were made essential that no pupil should go forth into the world until he or she had attained a fairly high standard of knowledge of one and other—becoming, in fact, a master or mistress of ecclesiastical history and biography, martyrology and theoretical and practical divinity—there might be some reason to complain that the thing was being overdone and some curb to excessive zeal might be necessary. But why sneer at what even Presbyterian ministers must regard as the highest order of human knowledge, the doctrines and the history of Christianity? Have not they too their manuals for imparting religious instructions to the young? Do not they consider it wrong to speak lightly and irreverently of the faith? Yet, from the remark of Dr. Scribner it might be thought that he looked upon catechisms and compendiums of Church history as very poor stuff indeed! But what follows is more curious as a disclosure of the strange way in which the Synod teacher reached his conclusions. Some members, we are told, spoke of the condition of things in some Roman Catholic villages which they considered "deplorable in the extreme." And then comes the conclusion that "this is the state of things the Church of Rome is trying to force upon the Province of Manitoba." A few of these country parsons tell what some members of their flocks—full of sweetness and light, we may be sure—have told them of the Catholic schools in their neighborhoods. How these unnamed informants came by their knowledge depends say not. But, if we suppose, for argument's sake, that these Presbyterians of Catholic villages were free from any tinge of prejudice that would darken their judgment, so that their verdict was irrefutable, why should the condition of things in a few villages be acceptable as applicable to the working of the system all over the province? What report could be given of the Protestant schools of Ontario, if judged on this principle of ex uno (ex punctis) discipulae? Let fair-play Protestants reply. There is no human institution or system that has not its weak spots; to select those spots as characteristic of its principle or operation is unjust and absurd. And when the evidence even regarding them is of the vaguest hearsay kind, it is surely the merest prejudice to pay any heed to arguments which have no other basis. Yet the special pleading of the Presbyterian Synod is of this kind throughout, and our only wonder is that men of education and logical training lend their names to it. We deeply regret to learn that Mr. Felix Callahan, the well known printer and publisher, of this city, has been stricken by paralysis and his condition is very serious. Mr. Callahan has always been known to be a patriotic Irish Canadian. Much of his time has been devoted to the affairs of St. Patrick's Society and kindred organizations. We tender our sympathy to his family in their great affliction, and express the earnest wish that under skillful treatment Mr. Callahan may soon recover his health.

OUSTED BY THE SENATE.

During the last half century political and party designations have undergone some marked modifications of meaning. The coalition which at present administers the affairs of the British Empire is perhaps as good an illustration of this assertion as could well be found. It shows, on the one hand, that the old Toryism, which was a power to be reckoned with when Mr. Gladstone began his career, is completely dead, and, on the other, that some of those who call themselves Radicals, may, by the force of circumstances, accept first the name of Liberals, and ultimately, after a longer or shorter period of hesitation, pass over formally into the ranks of Conservatism. All parties must obey certain influences that spring from forces which they do not control, and incidents that cannot be foreseen will sometimes put not only the seemingly strongest party organizations, but even the most carefully framed constitutions to the test. Just as we sometimes find a professedly Liberal party, owing perhaps to some unlooked for dilemma, forced in self-defence to play the tyrant, or a strongly Conservative government constrained, in the course of events, to give a loose rein to the popular passions, so also do we find monarchies that are democratic in their tendencies, and Republics that like to play the despot. Great Britain has a constitution made up of precedents, that link the present with an immemorial past, and which, though full of curious anomalies, some of which are shocking to the logical mind, is wonderfully elastic and can be adapted to almost any conditions that can arise. A couple of years ago, before and after Mr. Gladstone's retirement from public life, an outcry was raised against what to many persons is the most glaring of those anomalies—the power of the virtually hereditary House of Peers to arrest popular legislation. By what to an impartial outsider might seem an anomaly not less strange, Mr. Gladstone deputed the task of carrying on the war against the House of Lords to a Prime Minister, who was himself a member of that House, and whose right to make his voice heard at all on questions of State was due to that fact alone. With what vigor the war was waged might be gathered from the fact that Lord Rowbery left the Peer's House stronger by three members than when he began the campaign. But, in spite of its antiquity and undoubted priority as a law-making power to the House of Commons, the British House of Lords, though it has the privilege of rejecting bills, cannot overthrow a ministry. It is not at all necessary that the ministry should enjoy its confidence in order to continue in existence. "Only for fifteen years out of the last fifty," wrote Mr. Gladstone in 1878, "has the ministry of the day possessed the confidence of the House of Lords." And Mr. Gladstone knows equally well for what proportion of the eighteen years that have since elapsed the House of Lords was friendly or unfriendly to the government of the day. It was reserved for a republican regime to make the upper chamber hold over ministers the power of life and death. The dispute between M. Bourgeois and the French Senate, which ended in the victory of the latter, is one of the most interesting chapters in the history of bicameral parliamentarism. It began nominally in the retirement of the minister for foreign affairs and the assumption of his portfolio by M. Bourgeois. But really that change of office only offered an opportunity to the majority of the Senate for an expression of that distrust with which it had from his accession to power regarded M. Bourgeois's administration. An uncompromising Radical by profession, M. Bourgeois, enjoying the good will of the Chamber of Deputies, had not deemed it necessary to conciliate the Senate. When in February that body pronounced upon the ministry a formal vote of censure, with special reference to the conduct of the department of foreign affairs, M. Bourgeois resolved to seek a vote of confidence in the Chamber of Deputies, and, having obtained it, he fancied that the matter ought to be allowed to rest there. But the hostile majority of the upper chamber thought otherwise and proceeded to a second condemnation of the Bourgeois Ministry. Again, on the Premier's appeal, the Deputies gave his administration their support. He was then advised by his friends to take no further heed of the Senate's opposition, and, as the head of a Government having the confidence of the people's representatives, he accepted the President's invitation, or it may be offered uninvited, as a challenge to public opinion, to accompany the Chief Magistrate of the country on his tour to the South. Meanwhile, the Easter recess coming on, the Senate having appointed an earlier date than the other chamber for re-assembling, one of its first acts was to pass a more emphatic verdict of condemnation on the Bourgeois Cabinet, claiming the right to terminate the life of a Government whose further existence it had pronounced disastrous to France's interests and reputation, and announcing

its intention of blocking important legislation, especially the urgent Madagascar credits, unless its sentence of deposition were promptly carried out. For some days M. Bourgeois maintained his wonted air of resolute calm, repeating his conviction that he enjoyed the confidence of the popular chamber, which, in the judgment of the best constitutional lawyers, was all that any French Government had hitherto deemed essential for the retention of office, that he had endeavored to do his duty to the country, and, even so far as his convictions permitted him, to satisfy the Senate, and that he felt it his duty to remain at his post, as head of the Cabinet, so long as the Chamber of Deputies did not withdraw its confidence. His supporters approved of Mr. Bourgeois's course and as a considerable portion of the recess of the Lower House was still unexpired, it was thought well that the Chamber of Deputies should be summoned for an early day, so that it might without delay give the Cabinet the sanction that would sustain it in resisting the pressure of the Senate. But the President, Mr. Faure, was drawn into the controversy by heated partisans and every day the situation was becoming more complicated. The upshot was that Mr. Bourgeois, notwithstanding his friends' protests, ended the crisis that has no parallel that we know of, unless we seek it in the ante-Union period of Upper and (especially) of Lower Canada. Hitherto the risks that a French Cabinet had to face from the Lower Chamber alone, through lack of coherency among the groups forming a majority at any time, were sufficiently serious. If the ousting of Mr. Bourgeois by the Senate becomes a precedent for general observance hereafter, the average life of a French Cabinet, under the Republican regime, will be shorter than ever. EDITORIAL NOTES. THERE is in England and Wales 14,900 foot ball clubs. IN April 36,917 immigrants landed at Ellis Island, New York, of whom 11,203 were Italians. IT is said Catholic books to the amount of about \$2,000,000 are sold every year in this country. THE Berlin Reichsanzeiger publishes a long article warning Germans against emigrating to the United States. MONDAY of last week was the one hundredth anniversary of Horace Mann, founder of the public school system of America. AN American journalist is authority for the statement that the dowries carried off to Europe by American wives reach a total of \$275,000,000. CAMBRIDGE, Mass., will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary as a town on June 2 and 3, amid the booming of guns and numerous festive gatherings. WALTER LEVY scores the new "Irish" opera of "Shamus O'Brien." Mr. Jessop, one of the authors, has already contributed several very doubtful stories about his countrymen. BROTHER Maximilian, of the Longueuil Academy, it is rumored, will be appointed Principal of the new college which the Christian Brothers order intend establishing in Pekin, China. L'UNIVERS, of Paris, states that a committee, encouraged by the Government, has adopted plans for the building of a Mahometan Mosque in Paris. Another chapter in the sad story of infidel and Masonic misrule in France. REAL estate and securities valued at \$215,000 have been presented to the Northwestern University by William Deering of Evanston, the well-known manufacturer. The gift will be used to swell the endowment fund. COLONEL P. B. O'BRIEN, of New Orleans, has given Bishop Keane, for the Catholic University, a check for \$1,000 for current expenses, and stated it was his intention of founding three professorships. This will mean a gift of \$150,000. LORD RUSSELL, the first Catholic Lord chief justice of England since the separation of that country from Rome, has a brother a member of the Society of Jesus, and several sisters in the Order of Mercy, two of whom are in this country. IN another column will be found the address of Dr. Roddick to the electors of St. Antoine division, in which he states that he is prepared to vote for Remedial legislation. Mr. Mackay, his opponent, has not yet made any pronouncement on the subject. What has he to say? THE Rev. Dr. Conaty, of Worcester, Mass., and president of the Catholic Summer School of America, will preach at High Mass, at St. Patrick's Church, on Sunday, 31st inst. It is quite possible that he may also deliver the instructions

in the evening of the same date. Dr. Conaty enjoys the reputation of being among the foremost in the ranks of the eloquent divines of the Catholic Church in the United States. AN industrial exhibition intended to illustrate the progress in trade and industry in Germany during the past twenty-five years, was opened last week at the Treptow Park, in Berlin, by the Emperor William. The opening ceremony was witnessed by immense crowds of spectators. AT the opening of the last Longford Quarter sessions, county court, Judge Curran, in addressing the grand jury, said he had great pleasure in congratulating them upon the satisfactory state in which he found the county, the number of Crown bills to go before them being only two unimportant cases. AN American exchange says that at a recent funeral "one of the bearers stated that there were over \$700 worth of flowers in the car, and another carload had been left in Boston which they were unable to bring." It seems to be high time that something should be done to repress such extravagance. THE Catholic Record of Indianapolis says that "Sir Charles Tupper, a Protestant, is leading the fight for Catholic rights in Canada; Wilfred Laurier, a Catholic, is leading the Liberal hosts on the attack against these rights. And yet there are people credulous enough to believe that Catholics vote at the wink of the clergy." LADY NELSON, of England, wife of Earl Nelson, has been received into the Catholic Church at Florence. The Earl is an active and devoted Anglican, one of the very pronounced church peers. Lady Nelson is a sister of the Earl of Normanton. The conversion of the Rev. Henry Cross, B. A., lately chaplain of the college, Eastbourne, Eng., is also announced. THE Boston Republic truly says:—"Nobody has any license to speak for the Catholic voters of the United States, or to pledge their votes to one man or party." Nevertheless, Catholics should be careful to vote for no man whose record shows that he is a bigot, even though he had to vote against his party that such a man be defeated. ONE of the signs of the times is the change that is taking place in the attitude of the people of England towards the Catholic Church. The great London daily journal, the Chronicle, speaks of a book recently published by the Catholic Truth Society of England. This book is called "Catholica," and it is made up of articles that explain Catholic doctrine. Its author is Mr. B. T. C. Coscaeloe. The Chronicle devotes a column and a half to a splendid review of the little volume. THE congregation of old St. Patrick's, Boston, are to be congratulated upon having broken ground for a new and splendid church. The ancient edifice where they have worshipped that it has evoked will cling to the old spot where it has stood for scores of years to come. Judging from the reports of the proportions and artistic merits of the new building, our Catholic friends will have added another monument of beauty to their city, as well as an edifice worthy of the faith of their fathers. THE Irish Priesthood is the name given to an able paper contributed by Mr. M. MacDonagh to the Contemporary Review. We take the following extract from it. "I think," writes Mr. MacDonagh, "that if the truth was really known, it would be found that the priests, as a body, are really in Ireland, as in every other country, a great conservative force, and that they have controlled and checked, rather than inflamed the excesses of popular agitation. What they, like the ministers of every dogmatic creed, fear, is the secularization of education; and hence their efforts, in which they have the authorities of the Irish church as allies, to bring about the denominationalization of the national school system." THE Paris Official publishes an order of the French Minister of War granting medals to certain Sisters. A gold medal has been awarded to Sister Clare, of the Order of Sisters of St. Charles, for twenty-seven years' service in the wards of the military hospital at Toul, and for previous service at Nancy, during the whole of which time she had given constant evidence of her devotion to duty. Silver medals have been given to Sister Gabrielle for thirty-six years' work, during twenty-three of which she has been superior; to Sister Adrienne for thirty-eight years' service; and to Sister Charlotte for eleven years' service. These last three religious have been attached to the mixed hospital of Verdun, and, says the official notice, have been remarkable for their zeal and their devoted care of the sick soldiers.