

The Mechanics' Institute's Report for the current year has been received. It would appear that the Institute is in a very flourishing condition.

The first lecture of the Course was delivered before the Institute on Tuesday evening by Dr. Fulford, Protestant Bishop of Montreal, on the subject of "Colonial Institutions." Towards the close of his very brilliant discourse he made the following remarks upon the institutions and the morality of our Yankee neighbors, in the justice of which we think that every one must agree:—

"Our neighbors, the United States, are a great and powerful nation, yet in their system there exists a deficiency. The speaker quoted from a fourth of July oration, by Hon. Horace Mann, in support of his last remark. Mr. Mann says that in the United States the experiment of self-government, must be tried anew. If the ballot-box is open to the promotion of wisdom and political integrity, it is also open to the introduction of avarice, envy, and all the baser passions. There is in the government a fatal malady at the heart, and one should tremble at the fearful catalogue of our crimes. Our business relations are tainted by speculation and dishonesty, and no rank in life is free from corruption and knavery. Such was the condition of things ten years ago. More recently the Bishop of Vermont, in a public address, remarked that bribery and corruption pervaded every circle of political life, and every class of business men. The Almighty dollar was their universal sin. The male and female blasphemers of the Bible were upheld in their doctrines by the political demagogues of the day. It was not strange that juvenile depravity should be young in years, but old in wickedness. The taint of moral darkness overshadowed the land. It is our duty to heed the warning, and not rest satisfied without a safer foundation than money and knowledge."

To the Editor of the True Witness.

Montreal, December 6th, 1855.

DEAR SIR—It is with mingled feelings of intense disgust at the authorities of New Haven Connecticut, and sorrow for the distressing circumstances under which a priest of our holy church is placed, that I now address you.

Through the columns of your truly Catholic paper the news will be read with feelings akin to those which made my bosom throb, and my heart beat with a quicker pulsation, on first reading of the atrocious outrage against the most sacred rights of the human race—that of holding communion with their God. The facts as taken from the New Haven correspondent of the N. Y. Herald are simply these:—

"NEW HAVEN, Nov. 24, 1855."

A Catholic Priest fined for the Exercise of His Ministry—*Singular Decision—Connecticut Ignoring the Constitution Guaranteeing Liberty of Conscience to All Denominations, &c.*

Great excitement exists here regarding a fine of one hundred and fifty dollars and costs of Court, assessed on the Rev. Mr. O'Neil, a Catholic priest, for administering the rites of religion to a dying woman, at her own repeated request, and the implied permission of her husband, who was a Protestant.

The decision was given on Thursday, the 22d inst., in the Superior Court in this city, Judge Waldo presiding. The counsel for the plaintiff were the Mayor of this city Judge Blackman, and Mr. Buel; and for the defence of the priest, R. J. Ingersoll and J. W. Webster.

In this case the priest was fined the above sum for administering the rites of religion to a Mrs. Blakesly, who was always a Catholic, and descended of Catholic ancestors. At her dying hour she sent for the Catholic priest. When he came, her husband, a Protestant, intimated to the priest that he was not wanted. The priest replied he had been sent for, and asked Mrs. Blakesly if the message he received was from her. She said yes. The husband then made no further objections, but, at the priest's request, left the room while his wife's confession was being heard. Yet for doing this, and performing other rites usual on such occasions, the aforesaid penalty has been imposed. Oh tempora! oh mores! In this land of presumed toleration, where the rights and liberties of conscience were supposed to have found a secure asylum, cannot a Christian have the rites and consolations of religion administered to her, if a bigoted and tyrannical husband intimates his displeasure or chooses to interrupt the final preparation of a dying wife, going before her Sovereign Judge? Is the priest who performs this ministry of peace and consolation, with the implicit consent of her husband, to be thus heavily mulcted? At least so says our Superior Court of Connecticut. And not only this; but the Judge affirmed that he had no doubt, and never had, but the priest could be obliged to divulge the secrets of confession, if it were pertinent to the case before the Court. Gentlemen versed in law know how different have been the decisions of eminent judges in this country, and even in England, before the repeal of her penal code.

To be sure, the Judge, in giving his decision, acknowledged that "the priest did no intentional wrong," yet awarded the above damages.

Had the circumstances been reversed—had a Protestant clergyman attended the Protestant wife of a Catholic husband, in the same circumstances—would the decision be regarded as a just one? Let the Protestant as well as the Catholic community look at this decision, without prejudice. It affects all Christian denominations. The present decision may be assumed as a precedent in deciding similar cases for all denominations, in ignoring that article of the constitution guaranteeing the free exercise of religion to every individual.

Now, Sir, after reading the above, will any one dare to tell us that the United States (that boasted land of liberty!) is a suitable place for the Irish Catholic immigrant to make his home?—where the religion which he professes is scoffed and mocked at, and our holy Priests are made the objects of the most bitter persecution—where convents are burned, churches are sacked, and where the liberty of the mob is triumphant—and where our unoffending countrymen and countrywomen (as in Louisville) in trying to save their lives from the wreck of their still burning houses (which the mob previously set on fire) are driven back and left to perish by suffocation and the flames.

I again ask—is this a fitting country for our poor exiled countrymen? The answer, if put to the test, would, I am sure, be a universal—No. The Boston Pilot and others, will tell us that a calm will always succeed a storm. But the storms which he thinks will be few and far between, have, of late years, shown themselves with alarming frequency. The intolerant puritanical spirit of their fathers, is at every favorable opportunity oozing out, as it were, from beneath the specious cloak of civil and religious liberty. I can assert without fear of contradiction that, in this enlightened nineteenth century, the persecution of our race and religion, here in liberty-loving America, (I mean, of course, the United States), is rife than in any European country for the last 50 years.

Oh, what a pretext for the pious horror of the multitude, if a Bible-monger is arrested in any of the Catholic Italian or German States for distributing amongst the innocent population his pernicious, and oftentimes blasphemous tracts! The horror of those

people would be up to the boiling point; nothing less than an explanation, and, if possible, at the cannon's mouth, would suffice to appease their holy wrath. And yet, Sir, these are the very same people who are so intolerant at home to the men who, in former times, shared all the dangers of their Revolution, and fought and shed their blood as freely as any of the born sons of the soil.

And this is the reward for the meritorious conduct of former years; and which called forth the hearty thanks of the great Washington himself. Oh! base ingratitude! Is a parallel to be found to it in the records of ancient or modern times?

LONGFORD.

SUPERSTITION IN THE UNITED STATES.—Superstition is altogether a plant of Protestant and pagan growth; and can only thrive where the true religion is ignored. To the frightful increase of demoralising and degrading superstitions in the United States, we have often had occasion to refer, as illustrative of this truth. When men cease to worship God, they give homage to the devil; when they Protest against Catholic truth, they immediately expose themselves to the snares of him, who is the father of lies, and the first Protester mentioned in sacred history.

Thus is it with our Protestant neighbors. God seems to have, as it were, given them over to strong delusions that they may believe lies; and the keen witted Yankees who laugh at the simplicity of poor Paddy crossing himself and saying his beads, are themselves the victims of the most abject superstitions, and dangerous practices. Witness the following from the N. Y. Times:—

"It is impossible to calculate the amount of ruin which clairvoyants and fortune-tellers work on the simple and weak-minded. We have heard well authenticated stories of terrible domestic misery resulting from a belief in the tales of these lying sorcerers. Sick people are prevented from consulting respectable medical practitioners, by a blind belief in these swindling quacks. Simple country people lose their time, their money, and sometimes their reason, in fruitless searches after lost or concealed treasures, aided and abetted by those self-instituted magicians. When people are credulous enough to consult such people, there are no bounds to their belief. No matter how gross the deception, they swallow it greedily, to their own misery, and the profit of the sorcerer. Even from the quiet rural districts we learn of the doings of these soothsayers. Every now and again, some honest farmer is trapped by one of the tribe, and induced to deposit money, without which the charm necessary to attain his object—whatever it may be—is incomplete. Money and sorcerer vanish, and the farmer's misfortune is celebrated in the items of a country newspaper. Some two hundred astrologers, clairvoyants and fortune-tellers exist in this City. From the spread of the trade we must perforce conclude it profitable, and predicate an enormous number of dupes."

The Canadian Monarchist says that a number of gentlemen, members of the Church of England, are about to hold a meeting to protest against the late Government appointment of another Protestant Bishop for Upper Canada. This appointment they consider an insult and an injury to every clergyman in Canada; and they deem it their duty to tell Her Majesty, as Head of the Church, that public opinion in Canada is opposed to any episcopal importations from Europe, which, if persisted in, may lead to a disruption of the establishment.

The Christian Guardian of Toronto—Methodist—denouncing the abomination of the St. Andrew's Ball given in that city, wants to be informed who St. Andrew is. "Nobody"—he says—knows "who St. Andrew was, and is." For the enlightenment of our cotemporary, we would refer him to the tenth chapter of St. Matthew, and third chapter of St. Mark; from which he will learn that St. Andrew was the brother of St. Peter, and an Apostle of a person named Jesus, the Christ. Surely the Methodists, if none of them know who St. Andrew was, must be a set of "Know-Nothings."

The Toronto correspondent of the Montreal Herald gives, as from credible authority, that Parliament will meet for despatch of business about the middle of February; when the Ministry will bring forward a motion for a special census of the Provinces, with the view of basing thereon a Bill for "Representation by Population."

THE DIFFERENCE.—In England fraudulent bankers are transported. In Michigan—says the Detroit Free Press—"a banker who committed a like offence has been elected to a seat in the Lower House of Congress." In Canada, our fraudulent bankers set up in business as Saints, and preside over Anniversary Meetings.

"THANKSGIVING DAY" IN THE U. STATES.—The N. Y. Times says that he heard "a New England Divine commence his Thanksgiving sermon with the startling remark, that, for his part, he saw little to be thankful for, speaking as a laborer in the vineyard of the Lord, for there had been so few conversions during the year, that his heart had nothing to rejoice at."

The N. Y. Church Journal—Episcopalian—groans in spirit because that the Head of the Church, when in Scotland, assists at the heretical devotions of the Presbyterians.

THE "LORD'S PRAYER"—ABOLISHED.—We learn from the London Quarterly Review of October, that the extreme Puritan party amongst the Scotch Presbyterians—the "Poundtexts of the Free Kirk," as the Reviewer calls them—are discontinuing the practice of using the "Lord's Prayer," as savoring too much of Romanism—as affording, in fact, a dangerous precedent for liturgical worship.—Instead of this "Romish prayer," the Saints use a paraphrase of their own; and, of course, feel much happier.

The Montreal Gazette of the 6th inst., gives the following sketch of a smart chap, who has been trying to swindle our good citizens of Montreal:—

He came to Montreal a week ago, went to a hotel of the first class, as above stated. He entered his name on the books as the "Right Honorable A. P. Murray, Bramcoate Hall." He was magnificent in his tastes. He engaged besides his bedroom a private parlor. He must also have private meals furnished; a personage of his nobility could not dine with the vulgar herd at the table d'hôte. He must further have expensive meals. He would not look at cut joints; if he wanted a slice of ham, a whole one must be set before him—so of legs of mutton and all other meats.—In this fashion, with wines, mineral waters, extra attendance, carriages, guests, &c., he ran up a bill in one week to the tune of £31 15s. He also ran up a bill of £5, we are told, at a lively stable. He went to Mr. Ireland, the Engraver, and had a card-plate and seal engraved. One of the cards is before us.—It has on it the crest of the Duke and Earl of Northumberland correctly represented, and engraved in a manner that does credit to Mr. Ireland's skill. The crest represents a chapeau gu., turned up ermin., a lion statant, az., the tail extended, with the motto: *Esperance en Dieu.* On the seal is the same. He had his wife with him. For her benefit he hired a piano, and engaged the services of a music teacher. Of her we will speak in a few moments. He ordered clothing to the tune of £25 of Mr. Lavender, in McGill Street; but this was not furnished. He ordered furs of Messrs. Henderson & Co., Crystal Block; but Mr. Henderson was suspicious of the "Right Honorable," and would not allow them to be left without the cash. The "Right Honorable," in the first place, ordered some £70 worth to be sent on inspection. Mrs. Murray selected about £25 worth, and he kept them, but Mr. Henderson got them back again. It may be added that his manner excited Mr. Lavender's suspicions. He took a shirt for a pattern, and as he observed Mr. Lavender particularly to notice "Baron de Percy," marked on it, he remarked that that was his real name, and that he was at present travelling under an assumed one.

We must now go back a little. When he first came to the city, he went to the residence of a well known gentleman, connected with the Methodist Church, to whom he introduced himself, as the second son of Lord Murray. He said that his elder brother the Right Honorable Mr. Murray, was in the 46th Regiment, wounded at the battle of the Alma, and died at Constantinople. All this of course was a myth, but was not at once discovered. But he had particular claims, according to his account, on the sympathies of the gentleman he addressed. He stated that he had formerly been a member of the Anglican Church, but had been converted by the preachings of a celebrated Methodist minister, and had been so persecuted by his family for his desertion of the church of his fathers, he was obliged to leave home. He had been, he said, a great deal among Methodist ministers, and really manifested such knowledge of names and things as to give color to his assertion. He talked a great deal about lords, noble families, distinguished persons, very many of whom he claimed as his intimate friends. He said he had preached some time in the States, and disclaimed the desire of obtaining introductions in Montreal, except to a few Methodist ministers. He wished to live in private and retired. He then came to a part of his story in which we are inclined to think there may be sad reality; and this has reference to his marriage, at Albany, about a couple of months ago. He went there, he stated, as simple Mr. Murray, without any of the humbug of "Right Honorable" at all; professed to be a Methodist preacher, and preached; fell in love and married a young lady whose name we shall not mention. Her story in these particulars agrees with his. She, we are told, is about 20 years old, very good-looking, guileless in her manners, and in a very delicate state of health. Letters received from the lady's friends would seem to confirm the story, which, if really true, as we think it may be, is one of horrible hardship on her part, and infamous deception on the part of the "Right Honorable." He further represented that he preached at Burlington in the pulpit of a Methodist Minister, whose name he gave, and this statement has been proved correct. A gentleman in this city sent the following telegraphic message to the Rev. gentleman alluded to in Burlington:—

"Do you know the Right Hon. A. P. Murray? Is he a gentleman to be depended on? And what is his means?" The answer was dated Nov. 30th:—"He arrived here last week. Never saw him before. Never heard of him in England. Have no other proof of his being of noble family than his own word. His own word only as regards his means."

He made great professions of religion here, went to church, went to prayer-meetings, and we are informed took the Sacrament! In private his prayers and devotion, we are also informed, were very assiduous, and had so much the air of being earnest, as to have led to the belief on the part of the gentlemen to whom he first addressed himself, that he was a monomaniac.

His career in Montreal was brought to a close yesterday. His hotel-keeper in the morning saw our article, exposing one of his impudent attempts at deception; and demanded payment of his bill. The "Right Honorable" had not money at the moment, but would have some in a few days. That, however, would not do. The hotel-keeper showed him the Montreal Gazette, and sternly told him that he must pay or go to jail as a swindler. From this he shrunk; made over his effects in payment of the bill; and with his wife left the house. Mr. Ireland is now in search of him for payment of his bill for the fine engraving. He also has read the Montreal Gazette. He sees the gentleman on the wharf walking with his wife, and desires to have him arrested by the police; but Captain Hays refused to take such a step without a warrant. The space of an hour and a half is consumed in obtaining one, and although a young man (Mr. Ireland's clerk) was directed to follow in the footsteps of the imposter, he lost sight of him, and, at the time we write, he has not been found. It is supposed, however, that he cannot have gone far from the city, if he have left it at all, for the ferry boats and railway stations have been narrowly watched.

Before the warrant was obtained for his apprehension, he offered, we are informed, his cloak at one of the Railway offices in payment for his passage—proof that he had grown desperate and exhausted his means. What he will do, it is impossible to say. But what will become of the poor sick, shrinking, very delicate young woman, who, it is very likely he really married about a couple of months ago at Albany?

We may add to this, that the Hon. Percy called upon the Jesuit Fathers of this city, being anxious about the state of his soul, and much in need of their ghostly advice. The good Fathers, however, smell a rat, made some little inquiries, and left the Baron to "make his soul" by himself.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—James Mullin, Illinois, U.S., complains of the irregular receipt of his paper. It is duly forwarded from this office, and must therefore be delayed at some of the intermediate Post Offices.

THE CORROGAN MURDER.—We understand that the Government have been at last roused to take some step besides merely offering a reward for the apprehension of the persons accused in this case. The late members of the Water Police have been sworn in as a Government Police; and, we understand, it is likely that Col. Ermatinger, after being armed with a commission for the Quebec and Three Rivers Districts, will be sent down to St. Sylvester to make the arrests. Better late than never.—Herald.

OUR APPROACHING MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.—The following gentlemen retire from the City Council in March next; but are eligible for re-election:—

Wolfred Nelson, Esq., M. D., Mayor.
East Ward.....Alderman Leclaire.
Centre Ward.....Councillor Thompson.
West Ward.....Alderman Whitney.
St. Ann Ward.....Alderman McCombridge.
St. Antoine Ward.....Councillor Coursol.
St. Lawrence Ward.....Alderman Brindson.
St. Lewis Ward.....Alderman Homer.
St. James Ward.....Councillor Montreuil.
St. Mary Ward.....Councillor Lynch.

THE NEW WATER WORKS.—There seems fair prospect that next spring or early next summer, the water may be let into the works, and their capacity tested. We hope all will be found right. If so, Montreal may boast of water works on as magnificent a scale, we believe, as any city on the continent, with the exception of New York.—Gazette.

FATAL ACCIDENT.—We regret to hear, that on Friday last, two sons of W. Weller, Esq., of Cobourg, were drowned. The young men were skating, when one of them got into a hole in the ice, and his brother in attempting to extricate him, fell in also.—Herald.

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE.—The Police authorities have been engaged for some days past investigating the circumstances connected with the sudden disappearance, so long back as July last, of a man named George Jacquescon, a mason by trade. Nothing has as yet been elicited to show that he is not still "in the land of the living," but his friends persist in suspecting that he has met with foul play at the hands of a near relative, and hence the inquiry. He was last seen on the day of the St. Foy Monument celebration, in a tavern in St. John Suburbs.—Quebec Chronicle.

MELANCHOLY ACCIDENT.—On Thursday afternoon, 5th instant, while a number of scholars from the seminary under the care of the Rev. Mr. Brunet, one of the Vicars of St. John's Church were skating on the River St. Charles, in rear of the Marine Hospital, the ice gave way beneath a boy named Leclaire, who fell through. A companion named George Routhier, intrepidly rushed to his rescue, and as he likewise fell in, the priest hastened to render assistance, but was not more fortunate, for the ice gave way with him too, as also with another scholar of the name of Nadeau. There were now four imminent danger of their lives, all of whom would have inevitably met with a watery grave had it not been for the prompt and daring conduct of a young man named Giffard who, aided by a youth of the name of Paradis, succeeded at the risk of their own lives, in extricating the Rev. gentleman and two of the boys from their perilous position. Giffard, finding his attempt to save Leclaire and Routhier, the two still in the water, ineffectual, by his cries attracted the attention of some ship carpenters employed in Mr. T. C. Lee's yard, who thereupon came up, and by means of planks rescued Leclaire. They were not so successful with poor Routhier who, melancholy to relate had sunk to rise no more, and whose body was not recovered for some hours after the accident. Upon being taken from the water, Mr. Brunet, and his fellow sufferers, in a state of complete exhaustion, were removed to Mr. Lee's residence, where every attention was kindly paid them. The victim of this sad catastrophe, who so dearly paid for his endeavors to save a fellow creature from death, was 17 years of age, and the son of Mr. Michel Routhier, blacksmith, St. John Suburbs.—26.

The Toronto Colonist gives the following flattering portrait of Mister George Brown.—"Mr. George Brown, after years of fattening upon the public spoils in his old character of 'bully' to the Baldwin-Leslie administration—after extorting from his unwilling patrons slice after slice of official bread and butter—after dipping so deeply into the public purse, in the shape of contracts for useless printing, Penitentiary Commission pickings, &c., &c., &c., that at last he was cast off like an over-gorged leech—this same disinterested patriot, whose every movement is redolent of corruption and venality, has the assurance to undertake the duties of public censor; to twist the Barings and Mastersons with falsehood and cheating; to inauinate perjury against men in every respect his superiors socially and politically; and all this in the name of outraged purity and offended integrity!"

LOVE OR MONEY.—A man named Glynn, who is possessed of £30,000 worth of property in this city, was brought before the Police Court yesterday morning on a charge of drunkenness. The presiding magistrate ordered him to pay a fine of 5s. or be imprisoned. Will it be believed that the defendant positively refused to pay 5s. to liberate himself, and was escorted to jail where he will receive nine days' feeding at the expense of the public. We must add that he is an old bachelor; nevertheless, the circumstance may be ranked with the many curious little incidents in every day life which occasionally come to light. London is rapidly emulating its great prototype by containing some strange specimens of the genus homo.—London C.W. Times.

REMITTANCES RECEIVED.

Isle aux Noix, C. O'Hara, 6s 3d; Westport, P. Doran, 6s 3d; Sherbrooke, Rev. A. E. Dufresne, £1 5s; St. Anne Illinois, J. Mullin, £1; Eganville, Rev. Mr. Strain, 10s; Pickering, D. Donavan, 6s 3d; Toronto, Rev. Mr. Wardey, 12s 6d.
Per M. O'Leary, Quebec—Rev. Mr. Chauvin, 12s 6d; Rev. Mr. Halle, 16s 3d; P. Ryan, 6s 3d; J. Farrell, 6s 3d; F. Conway, 6s 3d; B. Bennett, 6s; J. McKenzie, 7s 6d; J. Lee, 15s; J. McNulty, 7s 6d; T. Fitzsimmons, 7s 6d; T. Corrigan, 7s 6d; M. Connell, 7s 6d; J. Dolvin, 15s; D. Goveney, 7s 6d; W. Hanley, 7s 6d; T. McLaughlin, 15s; M. Foran, 15s; P. McQuinn, 15s.
Per A. McCullum, Norton Creek—Self, 18s 9d; J. McGill, 12s 6d; T. Gorman, 12s 6d.
Per Rev. L. A. Bourret, St. Roch des Aulnais—Rev. Mr. Tetu, 12s 6d; D. Malone, 6s 3d; Madame E. B. Casgrain, 6s 3d.
Per A. E. Montmarquet, Carillon—T. Fitzgerald, 12s 6d; J. Kelly, 12s 6d.
Per J. Meagher, Kingston—C. Graham, 6s 3d; C. McManus, 6s 3d; P. Daley, 12s 6d.
Per Rev. B. Kelcher, Ingersoll—J. Delaney, 5s.

Birth.

At Quebec, on the 3rd inst., the wife of Mr. D. Carey, of a daughter.

Died.

In this city, on the 7th instant, Mr. James Irwin, a native of Enniskillen, County Fermanagh, Ireland, aged 72 years.

At Rawdon, on the 54th ultimo, Justin Corcoran, eldest son of Edward Corcoran, Esq., J.P., aged 18 years; much and deservedly regretted not only by his sorrowing parents and relatives, but by a numerous circle of friends to whom his amiable disposition had endeared him.

On the 9th instant, in this city, Henry Patterson, Esq., Editor and Proprietor of the Cornwall Freeholder, aged 36 years, deeply regretted by all who knew him.

YOUNG MEN'S ST. PATRICK'S ASSOCIATION.

AN ADJOURNED MEETING of the Association will be held on TUESDAY EVENING next, 18th inst., at eight o'clock precisely, in the Room adjoining the Recollet Church.

Members are earnestly requested to attend, as the proposed new Constitution, and other business of great importance, will be submitted for consideration.

By Order, P. J. FOGARTY,

Dec. 13. Secretary.