

The True Witness

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1897

OUR ST. PATRICK'S DAY SOUVENIR NUMBER.

Our Authorization.

MONTREAL, January 18, 1897.

To the Managing Director of THE TRUE WITNESS:

DEAR SIR,—We, the undersigned Pastors of the English-speaking parishes of the city, heartily approve the project of THE TRUE WITNESS, to issue a Special Souvenir Number in commemoration of the Golden Jubilee of St. Patrick's, the Mother Parish of our people in Montreal.

The first Mass was said in St. Patrick's Church on St. Patrick's Day, 1847, amid the universal joy of the English-speaking Catholic population, who, until then, had no church of their own at all proportionate to their numbers. Not a few are still living who remember how many, for want of accommodation, used to hear Mass kneeling on the street adjoining the old Recollet Church on Notre Dame street, opposite Dollard street.

The remarkable advance made since then in the material prosperity of our people, and the advantages which have accrued to them from a religious point of view, are matters for profoundest thankfulness to God. The befitting expression of this gratitude is one of the chief reasons for celebrating the jubilee, and we earnestly solicit for THE TRUE WITNESS, in its laudable endeavor, the active encouragement and patronage of our devoted people and their many well-wishers in and out of Montreal.

We also take this opportunity of expressing our approval of the course pursued by THE TRUE WITNESS, and recognize the valuable service it has rendered to every worthy cause.

(Signed),
REV. J. QUINLIYAN, S.S.,
Pastor of St. Patrick's Church.
REV. PHILIP SCHEFFHAUT, C.S.S.R.,
Pastor of St. Ann's Church.

REV. P. F. O'DONNELL,
Pastor of St. Mary's Church.
REV. J. E. DONNELLY,
Pastor of St. Anthony's Church.
REV. W. O'MEARA,
Pastor of St. Gabriel's Church.
REV. W. J. CASEY,
St. Jean Baptiste Church.

Every authorized advertising canvasser for our Special St. Patrick's Day Souvenir is furnished with credentials, signed by Mr. Michael Burke, president of the company, which he is required to show upon demand.

Enter into no contract with any person who cannot produce proper credentials.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Complaints have frequently been made to us of late regarding certain "nurseries of depravity" that are working havoc in the characters of our young men. The description that one pained and indignant observer has given us of one of these establishments is extremely vivid and unkind (which we can hardly hope) his informant has exaggerated or his eyes have deceived him, the state of things that it implies is serious and calls for prompt attention. The difficulty in the case is that the place which he denounces is licensed and, as it is not of the hole-and-corner class of offenders, its doings must be well enough known to the police. Of course, such a description would equally suit fifty other places of entertainment for men and beasts in our pleasure-loving city. Who are to blame for these evidences of a low state of

morals? Is it the restaurant-keeper? Is it the Municipal Government of the revenue system? Are we to seek the cause in a general lowering of the moral sense in the community at large, or is it to be attributed to the defective training of the young men of the present generation?

It is easy to put such questions, but it is a somewhat delicate matter to answer them. The first point to be settled is the truth of the accusations. In every society there is a certain ratio of pessimists—persons who, in the face of ample evidence of progress and improvement, persist in crying out that everything is going to the dogs. Such persons throw a wet blanket on all enthusiasm and try to dampen the ardor of their more sanguine neighbors. There is no lack of this element in the present generation. Possibly, this political scepticism has something to do with these doleful reports of the conduct of our young people in this year of grace, 1897. Would that we could bring ourselves to believe that such was the case. But our informants are not pessimists, but sober, thoughtful, sensible men, who would far rather give a good account of their neighbors than a bad one. Nor can we altogether close our own eyes to what is going on around us. We fear that it is hopeless to deny the truth of a great deal of these unfavorable reports of the way in which many of our young men spend their leisure time. There is at least truth enough in them to cause grave reflections as to the future when these same young men will be fathers of families and perhaps fill positions of public trust.

As the source of the evil, some would lay the blame on the authorities who let such things pass unpunished. Others point the parents and elders of the offenders, or, rather, victims, and charge them with neglect of duty. Others ask at what schools these boys (for some of them are little more) were prepared for entering upon the work of life. Finally, there are moralists who find the cause of the prevailing decline in morals and manners (for they are generally of a piece) in the spirit of the age—the boasted *Zeitgeist*—which is, alas, in many ways a denying spirit, a grasping spirit, a faithless spirit, without conscience, without right feeling. Well, probably, in all these conjectures, there is a trace of the truth, and if we knew exactly how much of the evil we ought to attribute to each assigned cause, we would be in a fair way of knowing whether it could be remedied and by what means the remedy could be effected. Perhaps if fathers, elder friends and employers kept their eyes open, used tact and spoke a seasonable word now and then, it might have some influence. On Catholics of every age, both sections and all stations, such a situation imposes a duty. "What can I do," some may say. "I have no influence," another may plead. But if all those who think or pretend that they have no influence were to exercise the moral away that belongs to every sincere baptized Christian, the conversion of the world would not be long delayed. As for the authorities, including the police force, they, at least, cannot offer such a plea for inactivity. They know their duties better than we can tell it to them, seeing that they have undertaken it under the most solemn sanctions and that the obligation is not to their conscience only—which may sometimes sleep—but to the public, which, in such matters, ought to keep wide awake, having to foot the bill in any case.

THE Daily Witness, in referring to the recent disastrous fire in the Western Block at Ottawa, seizes the occasion to indulge in a fling at the smokers. It suggests fire-proof smoking apartments should be provided for civil servants who indulge in the bad practice during business hours. Despite all the Daily Witness may urge in the matter, there will be always lovers of the weed in and out of the public service who will enjoy its soothing influence.

THERE must be something radically wrong in the administration of the police force of Montreal, when in the short space of one week no less a number than four citizens were attacked on our principle thoroughfares. Chief Hughes has the ability to prevent this state of things, and he should exert himself to do so. There is no question about the measure of his remuneration being ample enough for all the requirements of his office.

We have received a communication from "An Irish Catholic Liberal" of Quebec, in which he states in the most emphatic manner that a movement is being organized to deny to the Irish Catholics of the Ancient Capital their just claims to representation in Quebec West. We must request our correspondent to send us his address, otherwise we cannot publish his letter. We insist upon this rule in all cases. THE TRUE WITNESS is quite prepared to take up the grievance complained of by "Irish Catholic Liberal" on the condition mentioned.

THE CANONIZATION OF M. OLIER.

Of peculiar interest to every Catholic in Canada is the subject of M. J. J. Olier's canonization. How dear the name of that holy man must ever be to the faithful of this city it is almost needless to remind the readers of THE TRUE WITNESS. In Montreal is centred the undying influence of the work which, beyond the confines of his beloved France, was dearest to his heart. What he contemplated was for old France a revival of religion through a specially trained clergy; for new France, a city of God in the wilderness which should be a focus of evangelization for a continent. The founder of Saint Sulpice was exceptionally endowed by innate gifts, and by the circumstances of his calling for the great task which he was chosen to accomplish. In the lives of God's saints there are few incidents more touching than the answer of Saint François de Sales to the anxious mother when she consulted him as to the vocation of her son. At that time M. Jacques Olier de Verneuil, the father of the future Founder, who had already held several offices of high responsibility, was discharging the functions of Intendant of Lyons, a position to which Louis XIII. had appointed him; and Jean Jacques, with his brothers François and René, were studying at the Jesuits' College of that city. Saint François de Sales, who had occasional business in Lyons, had become acquainted with the Intendant, whom he held in high respect for his piety and other merits. It was this intimacy and her veneration for the character of the great bishop that emboldened Madame Olier to consult him as to her son's fitness for the ecclesiastical state. The Bishop at once cordially assented, promising to make the matter the subject of his prayers. Some days afterwards Madame Olier and her three sons went to hear the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in the chapel of his Filles de la Visitation of Bellecour, celebrated by the Bishop. Afterwards, Madame Olier presented her sons to the illustrious prelate, who greeted them with paternal tenderness. The anxious mother then unbosomed her heart of her fears for the future of the youngest boy, who had already caused great perplexity to his parents. "Ah! Madam," said the Bishop of Geneva, "have a little patience and do not worry yourself; God is preparing this good child of yours to be of great service in his church." Then, placing his hands on the boy's head, he solemnly blessed him. M. Olier received a still more solemn benediction from the great prelate and saint just before the latter yielded up his spirit.

Not less tender and memorable are the relations between M. Olier and another man of God of that age, Saint Vincent de Paul, whose name has become a synonym for heroic charity. Nor is the close of those relations less noteworthy than the parting of M. Olier with St. François. Here the respective positions are reversed, for it is M. Olier who is called away. St. Vincent de Paul, who had frequently visited M. Olier during his illness, heard on Easter Monday (1657), that his friend was worse than usual. He hastened to his bedside, and it was under the eyes of that saint that M. Olier breathed his last.

We cite these incidents, marking the beginning and the end of M. Olier's spiritual career as, if we may be permitted to say so, a sort of forecast of his entrance into the glorious choir of God's elect servants with whom it is the desire of so many that he should be formally associated. M. Olier was not unworthy of his saintly friends. He was not only the Founder of Saint Sulpice; he was a man of exceptionally holy life, to whose spiritual worth some of the greatest servants of God during two centuries and a half have borne witness. That the desire of so many fervent and grateful hearts may be fulfilled, is the prayer of every true Catholic.

THE proposal to abolish the system of free transmission of newspapers through the mails is, to say the least, a retrograde movement. Canada has always suffered through attempts of economy of this character, and will always continue to suffer so long as there are men in the Administration whose views of public affairs are characterized by such a spirit of narrowness.

THE real estate owners of Hochelaga Ward are very ambitious, judging by the measure of enthusiasm they are displaying in the endeavour to secure costly improvements. An evening paper, in commenting on this spirit of enterprise, which involves a large expenditure of money from the public chest, suggests, as a counter irritant, that there should be an effort made to extend the city westwards.

THE public man who can secure the greatest number of positions in the Municipal, Provincial or Federal service is always sure of his election in Montreal. That is the test required now, and the citizens who exact it are by no means amongst the class which some people so familiarly style the unlettered

masses. The manner in which healthy, active young men strive to secure positions in the public service is not calculated to inspire much confidence in the measure of judgment displayed by the rising generation. The Civil Service is an excellent institution in its way, but the politician has made it a stepping-stone to reach the goal of petty personal ambitions. Our young men should turn their attention to other walks of life where they will have fuller scope for their energies and talents.

WHERE SILENCE IS GOLDEN.

Miss Mary J. Onahan, if not the "Clever Woman of the Family," is a clever member of a clever family, and what she has to say on literary matters is not unworthy of consideration. Whether all that she says about every literary question is deserving of full approval—that is another story. She contributed recently to the Catholic Citizen an article on "Novels about Nuns," which, it seems to us, is not quite so cautious in its statements as it ought to be. All humanity—with its countless diversities of occupation, aim, emotion, virtue and vice—is, she holds, within the legitimate domain of art. She differs from those old-fashioned people, therefore, who think that "a novel about a nun is necessarily a shocking novel, that the subject is a sacred one which the novelist has no right to meddle with, to draw into the vulgar light of every day." Miss Onahan, as "a true modern," maintains "no subject is too sacred for the pen of the artist." She insists, however, that the artist, in portraying the conventual, as well as every other phase of human life, must "portray it truthfully."

Miss Onahan then gives a few illustrations of the success attained in this branch of artistic portrayal by writers who are lacking neither in creative gift nor in popularity, and her necessary verdict is that they have miserably failed. She calls their conventional characters "hybrid creations of the novelist's imagination," and in one instance she characterizes the picture presented by the literary artist as "a study of horrors." The strange thing is that it is not Protestants or non-Catholics who thus offend against truth and reality, but Catholics, who ought to know better. Can it be wondered at, then, if those who are aliens by birth and training and persistent estrangement from the Catholic fold showed, when they attempt to treat of such subjects—subjects of which they can have for the most part but a book or hearsay knowledge—fall into still more grievous errors, and paint convent life on a canvas that is full of misrepresentations? The writers that we have now in our mind are not the bigoted and virulent foes of Catholic doctrine and practice, but those who, being well-meaning enough, or at least not deliberately hostile, go astray through sheer ignorance.

That there are Catholic writers who know by actual acquaintance or by associations based on kindred enough of the religious life in some of its manifestations to be able to make a portrayal of it that is not a travesty, may be admitted. But there is always a danger of exaggeration in some direction. There are very few Catholic writers who, like Madame Craven, can deal with such delicate questions with the candor of sincerity, and, writing simply of what they know, neither go beyond the truth nor fall short of it. Yet even Mrs. Craven sometimes goes too near the ridge of a precipice, as where she makes a Catholic accept the ministrations of a Russo-Greek priest. Mrs. Craven is, however, most careful, in treating of convent life, to correct some popular misapprehensions such as that to which Miss Onahan refers, with only a partial condemnation, as to the forcing of girls into the cloister. Mrs. Craven shows, by example, how on the other hand the gates of the cloister are constantly guarded against premature or inconsiderate admission.

We forbear even to quote some of the instances that Miss Onahan gives of the shocking perversion of truth and common sense by writers who write for a sensation-loving public without conscientious reticence as to matters the true significance of which they have never grasped. Where it seems to us she has failed to do her duty as a Catholic is in not having denounced the adoption of such themes for fiction altogether in the face of such grave misapprehension. Of course, the introduction of a Sister of Charity discharging the duties of her divine calling cannot well be found fault with. Neither would any reasonable critic condemn all reference to the convent as a nursery of truth and the religious and domestic virtues. Such occasional mention of religiousness may be necessary for the evolution of the plot. But that is wholly different from making a nun the heroine of such tales as Miss Onahan has criticized, some of which are monstrously untrue and can only work harm to weak minds. Surely any loss sustained by the non-existence or withdrawal of the extremely rare and true pictures of convent life in fiction, where the temper has been able to grasp

a high idea and to give it shape on the printed page, would be fully compensated for by the effacement of such grotesque caricatures as those to which Miss Onahan has called attention.

MR. DEVLIN'S SCHEME.

The grounds on which some of our Canadian contemporaries have decided to oppose the Irish immigrant scheme of Mr. Charles R. J. Devlin, M. P., appears to us to be insufficient.

The plea, that our ancestral land has been already sufficiently depopulated of its Catholic inhabitants, is beside the question, so long as Irish people continue to leave Ireland in the hope of bettering their condition. Most sincerely does every true son of the old sod hope, most ardently does he pray, for the time when for Irish men and Irish women there will be no land so happy, so comfortable, so prosperous, as the dear old sod to which their hearts are so devoted. But even the most sanguine of patriots have, sadly, to admit that for that halcyon time we must still patiently wait.

It is vain to make war with facts. As matters stand, there are communities in Ireland for a considerable proportion of the century there has been an exodus from Ireland. In successive years so great was the outflow that one might wonder not that the population was diminished, but that there were any of the old stock and faith left in the island at all.

But there is another question that has often been put by thoughtful historians to British statesmen. How is it that, during the years of the perpetual exodus, so little effort was made to settle the exiles on lands within the British dominions, instead of letting them go to swell the numbers and further the enterprise of an alien nation?

That, wherever they settled, those hapless wanderers might have cherished some degree of resentment against a rule to which they, not unreasonably, ascribed their misfortunes, may be true enough. But the duration of that resentment would depend on the locality and on the surroundings of the new home in which the exiles found rest for their weary feet. Those of them who were induced to settle within the Queen's domain were fairly dealt with by the authorities and found kindly and helpful neighbours, were more than likely to become in time reconciled to their lot, ready to defend it if assailed, glad to avail themselves of the educational and other advantages that it offered to their children, to take an interest in public affairs, and, if they were industrious and persevering, to attain a degree of prosperity which, for most of them, would have been unattainable in the old land.

This has been the lot of many an emigrant party that left Ireland in the years of distress and whose descendants to-day are thrifty, happy and, in many cases, influential members of the community.

There is no reason why our countrymen who have decided to try their fortunes in another country should not be induced to occupy some portions of the vast area of new land opened up in the Dominion.

Let us hope that the day is not distant when the course of improvement will render it needless for Irish people to seek a home beyond the shores of the land they love. But, surely, so long as the necessity continues, it is wise to guide the emigrants to Canadian rather than foreign lands, where they may enjoy the advantages of just such a constitution as her representatives have so long been asking and are yet bound to obtain for Ireland.

We would remind our young correspondents to Aunt Nora's Corner that all communications must reach our office on Thursday or Friday of each week, in order to ensure publication. This week we have been obliged to hold over a number of very interesting letters describing St. Patrick's Church. Our young folks need not, therefore, be anxious regarding their letters, as they will appear in our next issue. The same rule also applies to letters from subscribers, unless in cases of great urgency.

THE Catholic electors of St. Boniface will be confronted with a solemn and important duty at the approaching election of a representative to the House of Commons. They should not be cajoled by any sophistry such as that recently advanced by vacillating Catholics, who urge the plea of giving the so-called settlement a trial. They should be true to their Catholic principles and condemn an arrangement which sacrificed their most cherished rights.

THE Dublin Freeman, in its issue of the 6th inst., refers to the prospect of unity in a leading article. It closes with the following significant statement:

We do not think that it will or ought to be the desire of anyone to force the pace. We may safely leave the healing influence of the discussion of the last

week to penetrate the mind of the country, and hope and pray that better days are coming when the hatchet will be buried and the wasting strife in which we have been engaged ended for ever.

Now that the arbitration treaty is being discussed, people are recalling a prediction made by General Phil Sheridan in a speech at the Centennial banquet in Philadelphia in September, 1896. The General then said:

"There is one thing that you should appreciate, and that is the improvement in guns and in the material of war, in dynamite and other explosives, and in breech loading guns, as rapidly bringing us to a period when war will eliminate itself, when we can no longer stand up and fight each other in battle, and when we will have resort to something else. Now what will that something be? It will be arbitration. I mean what I say when I express the belief that if any one now present here could live until the next centennial he would find that arbitration will rule the world."

ARCHBISHOP ELDER was asked by a Cincinnati Post reporter what he would do if elected mayor. Said he:

"I would try to close the saloons on Sunday and abolish the immoral theatrical posters, both of which are a disgrace to the community."

"Another thing I would endeavor to accomplish would be to stop, if possible, the sensational publication of criminal and other disgraceful and disgusting trials. It is the greatest evil with which we have to contend. Familiarity with crime and its details may be divided into three stages: First it is endured, then pitied, then embraced."

"The argument that exposure is greatly dreaded and acts as a restraint on crime, is weak. Those who dread such exposure are the very ones who may be redeemed and, if exposed grow hardened, and when hardened desire notoriety."

ST. PATRICK'S MISSION.

The general Mission in charge of the Redemptorist Fathers for the parishioners of St. Patrick's opened on Sunday evening under circumstances which must have been a source of real happiness to the pastor, Rev. Father Quinliyan.

The married women of the parish had the honor of inaugurating the spiritual undertaking, and the attendance was unprecedented. Every portion of the vast edifice was crowded, including the spacious gallery. The sermon of the evening was preached by the Rev. Father Hogan, C.S.S.R., who is the possessor of a magnificent voice, which was heard throughout every part of the Church.

There are five Missionaries in attendance: Rev. Fathers Wissel, Hogan, Doyle, White and Wissel.

The married women of the parish are certainly to be congratulated for the measure of enthusiasm they have displayed in assisting at the different services. The good example they have so nobly shown will be in consequence emulated by the other sections of the parishioners.

The exercises for the married women will close on Sunday afternoon, and the Mission for the married men will open in the evening at 7.30.

St. Mary's Parish.

The annual meeting of the St. Mary's C. Y. M. Society was held in their Hall, 1113 Notre Dame Street, on Sunday, the 7th inst., the principal business being the election of officers for the ensuing year, which resulted as follows: President, T. W. Burns; 1st Vice, Thos. McCall; 2nd Vice, Jas. Weir; Rec. Sec., W. P. Burns; Treasurer, J. A. Heffernan; Cor. Sec., J. P. Purcell; Fin. Sec., J. J. Phelan; Marshal, Peter Doyle; Librarian, Jas. Kearns. Chairmen—Auditing Committee, John Ryan; Membership, M. J. Murphy; Hall, Patrick Doyle.

Requiem Service for Brother Noah.

On Thursday last the Redemptorist Fathers of St. Ann's Church sang a Solemn Requiem Mass for the repose of the soul of the late Brother Noah. Rev. Father Scanlan officiated and was assisted by Rev. J. Heffernan. The music, under the leadership of M. P. J. Shea, was of the highest order. The children of St. Henri Church Brothers' School joined with the regular choir. The attendance was very large on the part of the laity and there were delegations from all the houses and schools of the Christian Brothers. Hon. Judge Curran and his family occupied the front pews. This spontaneous act on the part of the Redemptorist Fathers is highly appreciated by all the relatives and friends of the late lamented Brother Noah.

A Deserving Charity.

In a recent issue we called attention to the sad condition of a young Scotch Catholic named William McLean, residing at 352 St. Lawrence street. Arrangements are now under way to hold an entertainment for his benefit at the Free Library Hall, Beury street, on Monday evening next, and a number of ladies have interested themselves in disposing of the tickets. The object is a deserving one.

A petition from the Catholic clergy of the archdiocese of Boston, praying for the enactment of laws to prevent the sale of intoxicating liquors in any public park in the state, will soon be presented to both houses of the Legislature. The petition is signed by Archbishop Williams and about 170 priests of the diocese.

"What did you stop that clock in your room for, Jane?"

"Because, Mum, the plaguey thing has some sort of a fit every mornin' Morn' just when I wants to sleep."—Detroit Free Press.