

The True Witness

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 1895

A WORD TO OUR READERS.

Readers will help THE TRUE WITNESS materially by patronizing those who advertise in its columns. The Catholic population of Montreal is numbered by the thousands, and they should patronize those who lend aid in building up the business of their favorite paper.

ENGLISH LITERATURE.

We have received a few advance sheets—sample pages—of a work entitled "Main Lines of English Literature," a volume to be given to the world by the Brothers of the Christian Schools. The Editor's Note, at the opening, states "attention is called to the arrangement of the *Chapters* and to the *Reviews* at the close of the development of each chapter;" also that, "the course of reading, if carefully followed, will be a stepping-stone that will help in preparing pupils to enter the *Catholic Reading Circles*, now generally established in leading parishes." The volume is expected to be ready for issue in July, and between this and the 15th February, criticisms are invited concerning the utility of the work. Such criticisms to be sent to "Brother Noah, Books and Stationery Department, 48-50, Second Street, New York City."

It is now about two weeks since we received the advance pages, and we have made as careful an examination of them as circumstances would permit. We had intended, at first, sending our remarks privately to the Editor of the work, but on due consideration we feel that it may be for the benefit of all concerned that we should give them through the columns of the paper.

From fifty pages of the work a pretty fair idea can be formed of its plan, the method adopted in carrying out that plan, and the utility of the publication. As to the utility—in fact opportuneness—of this book we have not the slightest doubt. In fact, we can conscientiously say that it is almost a necessity at the

present time. To criticise the "Main Lines of English Literature" we would needs have the whole work before us. Beyond our individual faith in the compiler and in the order of teachers who are responsible for its execution, we have no guarantee that the couple of hundred (or more) pages to follow are to be in every sense equal to the fifty we have read. But if the whole work is in harmony with the initial chapters, we can freely say that one of the best and most reliable aids to the true study of English literature is about to be given to the reading public. Apart from its utility as a text book in schools, we foresee a far wider range for its beneficial circulation. Not only in *Reading Circles*, but even in the hands of all students or lovers of the best that English literature affords, by its very clever plan, and its easy methods, this volume must be a source of incalculable profit.

Three special under-currents seem to sweep along, beneath the surface of this stream of English literature; we might express them as follows. Firstly, "the literature of a nation must consist, largely, of its religious thought and convictions;" secondly, that in the history of English literature, in general, and in the study of each particular master, it will be found that the best and greatest as well as most lasting works are due to the inspiration of Christianity; and thirdly, that literature being one of the chief agencies by which religion supports "her claims, her worth, her history," she cannot oppose literature "so far as it is the expression of the true, the good, and the beautiful;" and she only condemns literature when it "becomes the vehicle of falsehood and immorality."

With these three points ever in view, we find the author starting out with the various elements that enter into the formation of our language, following down, rapidly but clearly, the different changes that preceded the gradual supremacy of the home-tongue, indicating the reasons why the English tongue prevailed. Beginning with Geoffrey Chaucer, a short chapter is consecrated to each great writer of English, or else to the special epochs in the rise and progress of English literature. We will cite the headings in the Chapter on Chaucer, and these will indicate the trend of the whole work. Let it be remembered that each chapter is merely a sketch in rough and large lines, presenting the groundwork of a picture the details and colorings of which the student is expected to fill in—seeking his materials for the labor in the places indicated by the author.

Let us take Chaucer. A short biography, including all the disputes as to the date of his birth and the rival claims of Oxford and Cambridge regarding his education. His influence upon all future English writers; his opportunities; the results drawn from them; his dealings with his neighbors; his loyalty to the Church; his share in fixing the basis of English; plans and plots of his works; his principal writings; chief events of his life; his death. All this we have in eleven pages. Then comes a series of suggestions for a review of the subject, enabling the student to prepare an essay, a lecture, or even a volume, if he so desires, on the life and influence of Chaucer and his works.

So do the chapters run on; the Elizabethan era; Milton, Butler, Bunyan and Dryden, representatives of majesty, wit, imagination and satire, and thus down—we expect—to our own day. In the pages we have read there is an ever-increasing interest—naturally so as we draw nearer to more familiar times and men. We are not prepared, with only those fifty pages, to pronounce upon the

work; but we are prepared to say that such a book has long, long been needed, and we know of no attempt to fill up the gap more worthy of encouragement and more likely to succeed than "Main Lines of English Literature."

SUNDAY next will be the feast of the Holy Name of Jesus, the name before which every creature must bend the knee. It is at once the sweetest, most powerful, and most terrible Name that exists. The sweetest, because He was the incarnation of Love, Truth and Mercy; the most powerful, because, as God, He called from nothingness all that exists, and redeemed that which had fallen away through the instrumentality of the Eoemy; the most terrible, because He is and will be the Judge of mankind, the One in whose hands is the balance to decide the eternal fate of each individual. But it is as the sweet, loving, obedient member of that inimitable Holy Family that His name is chiefly considered upon the occasion of next Sunday. It is a day when reparation should be made for all the insults heaped upon that Name.

Don't forget that Saturday, the 19th inst., is to be the Shamrocks' gala night at the Academy of Music. In addition to what we stated last week concerning this celebration we may add that amongst those who are to take part in the entertainment are the names of Miss Hollinshead, Prof. James Wilson, Prof. Wm. Sullivan, John J. Rowan, Thomas C. Emblem, Charles Hamelin, Frank Feron, Alex. T. Rice and James Doherty. Any one of these talented singers and musicians would be a source of attraction apart from the significance of the occasion. Go, by all means, and see the Shamrocks receive their trophies.

ONCE more we wish to call attention to the St. Ann's Young Men's Society carnival. The ceremonies commence on Sunday morning next and will end with the banquet on Wednesday evening. Holy Communion, in a body, at 8 o'clock on Sunday; Pontifical Benediction, by Mgr. Fabre, and sermon by Rev. Father O'Sullivan, at 6.30 Sunday evening; dramatic and literary entertainment and lecture by the eloquent St. Albans priest, on Monday evening; tournament of games on Tuesday evening; and a magnificent banquet, by the members of the Society to their friends on Wednesday night, constitute the leading features of this, the tenth anniversary of the establishment of St. Ann's Y.M.S. Everything promises a grand success, and no matter how great it may be it cannot be more so than the members of the Society deserve.

THE following letter of thanks, from Lady Thompson, has been received by the Secretary of the "Catholic Truth Society of Montreal." It is dated Ottawa, 2nd January, 1895:—

"SIR,—I am directed by Lady Thompson, to convey to the members of the Catholic Truth Society of Montreal her very grateful thanks for the kind expressions of sympathy contained in the resolution communicated in your letter of the 22nd December, as well as for their generous appreciation of the services both to Religion and to the State of her late husband.

I am, sir,
Your obedient servant,
JOSEPH POPE."

The letter is addressed to Mr. H. J. Codd, Secretary of the Catholic Truth Society.

We have received the first issue of a most welcome publication, The De La Salle, published monthly by the students of the De La Salle Institute, New York

city. Nearly every university or college of importance, throughout America and Canada, has its special organ in the form of a magazine, and some of them are equal, if not superior, to the general monthly publications sent out from regular business establishments. By every indication The De La Salle is destined to hold a foremost place in the ranks. It should be so, for it comes from one of the great centres of America, from one of the finest educational institutions in New York, and from an Order whose pupils are never found behind in the great competition of education. May it flourish is our best wish.

We clip the following interesting paragraph from the Sacred Heart Review, one of the brightest and best informed of our Catholic American exchanges:

One of the journals of the Evangelical Church in Prussia publishes an extract from the census of 1890 from which it will be seen that the number of mixed marriages is estimated at 255,802, and the number of children born from these marriages is 469,993, of which 258,668 were brought up in the Evangelical faith and 211,325 in the Catholic Church. This signifies a loss of 47,343 children to the true Church, and yet in the face of this statement, certain Protestant journals are still to be found lamenting the inroads made in their ranks by the frequency of mixed marriages. It would seem to us that it is for the Catholics to resent this state of affairs and to do their best to effect a change.

ST. ANN'S T. A. & B. SOCIETY.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING—ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

The regular monthly meeting of the St. Ann's T. A. & B. Society was held on Sunday last, 13th inst., in their hall, corner Young and Ottawa streets, and was very largely attended, the president Mr. P. Flannery, in the chair. The parish priest of St. Ann's Church, Rev. Father Bancart, was present and gave a short address on temperance, and congratulated the society on its prosperous condition, and promised to do all he could to increase its members, and said that temperance would be made a special point at the great mission to be held in St. Ann's parish at an early date. This being the meeting preceding the annual meeting of the society, the nomination of officers for the coming year was proceeded with. The following gentlemen were then proposed and elected:—President, Mr. J. D. Quinn; vice-president, Mr. James Dolan; secretary, Mr. Thos. Rogers; treasurer, Mr. M. J. Ryan; collecting treasurer, Mr. Thomas Ward; assistant collecting treasurer, Mr. Tracey; grand marshal, Mr. Wm. Dounelly. Executive Committee—Messrs. W. Howlett, James Shanahan, M. Burke, Thos. Quinn, M. Darden J. Brady, T. Crean, M. J. Mullins, C. Shanahan, J. Pigott and D. Gahan.

Moved by Mr. M. Bardon, seconded by Mr. T. Quinn, that a vote of condolence be passed on the death of our late member, Mr. James Row, and that the secretary be instructed to have a copy sent to his relatives. Carried.

The president announced that although they had more deaths in the past year than usual the society was still in a prosperous condition financially. A most successful meeting was then brought to a close.

ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL.

On Sunday last there was a special musical service, at 8 p.m., with orchestra, at St. James Cathedral, the programme being that intended for Christmas benediction, which had been postponed: Th. Dubois' "Adeste Fideles"; Gounod's "Nazareth"; Gounod's "Ave Maria," with violin obligato by Monsieur F. F. Goulet; Wagner's "Tantum Ergo"; Gounod's "Laudate Dominum Omnes Gentes." Soloists: Mr. Ant. Destroismaison, Mr. F. Pelletier, Mr. E. Lebel. Organist: Mr. O. Pelletier. Choir master: Mr. G. Couture.

Dr. W. Seward Webb, of New York, has offered the Sisters of Mercy 100 acres of land for a Catholic sanitarium to be located near Saranac Lake, N.Y.