

## THE TRUE WITNESS

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT

No. 751, Craig Street Montreal, Canada.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Country.....\$1 00

City.....1 50

If not paid in advance: \$1.50 (Country) and \$2 (City) will be charged.

Subscribers, Newfoundland, \$1.50 a year in advance.

TO ADVERTISERS.

The large and increasing circulation of THE TRUE WITNESS ranks it among the best advertising mediums in Canada.

A limited number of advertisements of approved character will be inserted in "THE TRUE WITNESS" at 15c per line, first insertion, and 10c per line each subsequent insertion. Special rates for contracts on application.

All Business letters, and Communication intended for publication, should be addressed to D. M. QUINN, Proprietor of THE TRUE WITNESS, No. 751 Craig street, Montreal, P. Q.

WEDNESDAY.....APRIL 12, 1898

## HON. E. J. FLYNN.

For some time past hints have been flung out, by the Quebec Daily Telegraph, and the Daily Witness' Quebec correspondent, that the Hon. Mr. Flynn was to retire from political life and succeed the Superintendent of Public Instruction. These rumors and remarks have been finally settled by the honorable gentleman giving, personally, a flat denial to them. The matter being now understood, we need not refer any further to the probabilities or possibilities of what the Commissioner of Crown Lands might or might not do in the future: suffice for our present purpose to state that Hon. Mr. Flynn is the last man, not only in this Province but in all Canada, that we would wish to see disappear from the stage of active public life. For this our reasons are many; a few of them we will give. But before so doing we desire to call special attention to the significance of such rumors and hints when coming from the Quebec Daily Telegraph, and especially from the correspondent of the Daily Witness.

These two organs are most deadly opposed to the Government of which Hon. Mr. Flynn is a member; and as it is a well-admitted fact that the Commissioner of Crown Lands is one of the most able men in the whole Province, and certainly the cleverest and most experienced administrator in the present administration, it is very natural that these newspapers would be overjoyed to learn of his retirement from the Government. It would be at once a severe blow to the party in power and a matter of congratulation for the Telegraph and Witness. By starting these rumors, from time to time, it is expected that eventually some one will catch on to the scheme, and the result may be—what is so much desired—a movement in the direction indicated. The Quebec organ pretends to be interested in the welfare of Irish Catholics, and it pretends that Mr. Hackett would be a more national representative than Hon. Mr. Flynn, especially because the latter has had a French training, and speaks that language as well, if not better, than he does the English. The Daily Witness cannot claim to have any interest in Irish Catholics, beyond a pretty marked one in their destruction, yet it—through its Quebec correspondent—is of the same opinion as the other sheet. It is evident that both row in the same boat as far as politics are concerned. With that we have nothing to do; but we have something to say when there is a question of justice to a co-religionist and a fellow-countryman.

Whatever we deem proper to say regarding Hon. Mr. Flynn, we wish it to

be thoroughly understood that in no way does it detract from the merits and claims of any other person. We understand that Mr. Hackett is a most estimable gentleman, a clever tactician, an able speaker and a sound patriot, as well as a good Catholic; nothing would please us more than to see him promoted and to know that he occupied a sphere of usefulness equal to his abilities—both for his own and for his fellow-countrymen's interests. But that recognition in no way should necessitate the loss that we, in this Province, would sustain were the Hon. Mr. Flynn to retire from public life. And if such were the condition, we would never agree to the change. In every acceptance of the term, Hon. Mr. Flynn is one of the most able, if not the most able man in this Province to-day. This is not said in the language of flattery, nor is it a mere idle statement; all who know that gentleman intimately can vouch for the truth of what we advance; all who know him merely as a public man cannot fail to recognize the same. That petty objection, that could only emanate from a narrow mind, that Hon. Mr. Flynn is more French than Irish, is easily disposed of and we proceed to settle it before looking at the more serious side of the question.

Like most of us, who were not born in Ireland, Hon. Mr. Flynn comes from an honorable and a thoroughly Celtic stock. He was born in Canada, and is an Irish-Canadian in all the meaning of the term. He received a thorough training in our best educational institutions; his associations have been more French than English, and his familiarity with that language is something exceptional in its depth and exactness. But if the language is to be the test, then we say that historically, by associations of the past, both here and in the Old Land, the French language is more closely allied to the Irish than ever could the English be. The Celtic tongue alone is that of the Irishman. He was compelled to learn the English at the point of the bayonet; the French he learned through happier relations with the people of that glorious and sunny land. The McMahons, O'Neills, and Keilys of France to-day are none the less Irish because they speak very imperfectly the language of the Saxon; the O'Donnells of Spain are certainly not less Celtic because they don't understand a word of English. France gave refuge to their ancestors when flying from the persecutions inflicted upon them by England. It was Irish and French that blended in the cheer of victory at Fontenoy; no English was spoken around the bivouac of triumph that night. In our own country, here on the banks of the St. Lawrence, the O'Briens, O'Neills, Donnellys, Fitzpatricks, Frasers, Honans, McMillans, McCarthys, and hosts of others are not a whit less Irish, nor is their Celtic blood less pure, because they speak imperfect English, because they talk in the language of the French-Canadian people who adopted them as infants when the scarlet bird of fever swooped down upon the land and left them orphans in the days of that fearful scourge. Deep down in their souls is the love of the land of their fathers, and that feeling is only intensified—not deadened—by the gratitude they entertain for their preservers in the days of peril. Even then were it true that a man, such an honor to our race as is Hon. Mr. Flynn, were able to speak the French with more fluency than the English, the fact would only add to instead of taking from his claim to be an Irish-Catholic representative. But the contention we hold to be false; we would pity some of these critics were they call-

ed upon to cross swords in English with the Commissioner of Crown Lands.

Apart from this narrow way of dealing with one who is looked upon as a political opponent, we claim that the towering ability as well as the personal qualities of Hon. Mr. Flynn challenge the admiration and respect of every unprejudiced and fair-minded man in the Province of Quebec. Leaving aside the wonderful capacity for work and the extraordinary administrative success which have marked his career as member of the different governments of which he formed part, we can turn with legitimate pride to the contemplation of those qualities of mind and heart—the indices of character—which mark so conspicuously his individual personality. We know of whom and whereof we speak. During three years the writer occupied a seat beneath Mr. Flynn's chair of Roman Law in Laval, and never can memory lose the impress of the grand thoughts, noble ideas, eloquent words, lofty principles that flowed, day after day, from the exhaustless fountain of his knowledge. The legal acumen, the historical erudition, the fund of anecdote and illustration, all tended to impress upon the young mind high ideals, and to give to the heart noble pulsations. Watching his career in after life, and gazing down from the impartial eminence that rises above the mists of political strife, we marked how faithfully and with what skill he put into practice those high principles which, as a professor, he inculcated. And throughout all the varied changes in a checkered career, we noted how truly faithful he was to the traditions of the Irish race, to the Faith of our fathers and to the principles of our people. In harmony with every movement that tended towards the amelioration of the country's condition, with every effort put forth to carry to a successful issue the cause of the old land, he, at the same time, preached patriotism by his example, and in his grand talents, his great perseverance and success, he stood forth upon the stage of our provincial affairs, an honor to his race, and one whom every Irish Catholic could be proud to claim as his national representative. This humble but sincere tribute we pay to one whose kindness we learned to appreciate, whose talents we were obliged to admire in days that are gone. The intervening years brought him public honors and triumphs which redound to the credit of our race in this Province; the future, we hope, will only afford him fuller opportunities of serving the cause of his Irish Catholic fellow-countrymen to all the extent that his heart would so ardently desire.

## SHAKESPEARE.

As is generally known, Mr. Keene, the American tragedian, plays a series of Shakespeare's masterpieces during the course of this week. The fact of his presence here recalled to our mind an idea regarding Shakespeare and his works that we had often intended expressing. Here is an opportunity. There perhaps never lived a writer whose works have been more popular than Shakespeare's; and what is better still, they lose none of their attraction with the lapse of years. It may also be said that no other poet has been criticised as has the Bard of Avon. His name is upon every lip and his works have become pre-eminently classic. Yet how many speak of Shakespeare who have never read one of his plays from prologue to epilogue; how many comment upon him and yet have never studied one of his characters; how many go into enthusiasm at the mere mention of a Shakespearean tragedy, and who never

witnessed the presentation of any of his works by a real actor and upon a properly arranged stage! How many? Tens of thousands!

We claim that no person, except a Booth, a King or a Keene, men who have made a life-study of Shakespeare's characters, can possibly fully appreciate these sublime and almost miraculous tragedies. It is in vain that you take a volume of Shakespeare and sit down to study and fathom it; you arise with a confusion of phrases and happy quotations, with a general idea of the tread of some particular play; but you have failed utterly to comprehend and to appreciate the genius of the work. Why so? We have often asked ourselves this question, and as often have we found but one answer. Because the works of Shakespeare were not, like those of Milton or other poets, made to be read in the quiet of the study: they were created expressly to be represented on the stage. Shakespeare's tragedies are not to be read, they are to be heard and seen. In that appears to us the real evidence of the great author's dramatic genius. You may have studied Hamlet for years, and unless you saw it on the boards and by first class actors, you failed to perceive the million beauties in that one work: but the moment you behold it in the theatre, interpreted by a sound, studious and real tragedian, the revelation is something indescribable, something astounding. Go and hear Othello; then return to your study and take up the volume; as you peruse it every minute perfection flashes before you, conjured up by the magic wand of memory. For these reasons, and many others that we have not space to develop, we conclude that the best evidence of Shakespeare's dramatic genius is the fact that his plays must be seen and heard before they can be properly fathomed in ordinary study.

## JULES FERRY.

"Jules Ferry has been unexpectedly elected President of the French Senate!" "Jules Ferry has unexpectedly died!" Scarcely had the former of these sentences been read, when the latter one was flashed across the wires. He was one of the very worst enemies of the Church in France. He secured the persecution and suppression of Religious orders in France, and he drove God from the schools of the country. So unjust and extravagant were some of his measures that even Gambetta was opposed to them. As the Philadelphia Standard says: "If to train up children to be infidels, to banish Christian teachers, close up Christian schools, suppress Religious Orders, be reforms, then Jules Ferry was a reformer."

Bad as this man's political career has been, still he cut a prominent figure in the affairs of France during the past fifteen years, and his name will be recorded upon the list of her statesmen. His life, and above all, his death, should certainly deserve a passing notice. During Mr. Grévy's first term, in 1879, Mr. Ferry was Minister of Education, and in that year he introduced his abominable Education Bill. His proposal aroused the hostility of French Catholics and everything possible was done to defeat the measure. It passed the Chamber of Deputies, but was rejected by the Senate on account of the seventh Article, which was specially directed against the Jesuits and other religious bodies. In 1880, under the Premiership of Mr. de Freycinet, this clause was again inserted in Ferry's Education Bill; but once more it was rejected by the Senate. It was then that the Ministry—at Ferry's suggestion—revived some obsolete laws, and