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WEDNESDAY...SEPTEMBER 11, 1895.

THE UNEXPECTED.

Rev. Principal Grant, of Kingston, went out to Manitoba to examine into the merits of the vexed school question and to report thereon. Of course, the learned gentleman's mission was in the interest of the great Presbyterian body, and it was confidently expected that he would discover new arguments in support of the Greenway contention. It must have been a rare surprise to his friends, and particularly to those most interested in the crusade against the Catholic separate schools, to find that the reverend gentleman is of a very different opinion from the one anticipated. This we learn from his first letter, on the subject, to the *Globe*. Of course we cannot agree with each and all of Principal Grant's expressed views, but he has certainly touched the true chord in regard to the efficiency of the schools and the course which the Manitoba Government should have taken. In speaking of the uncalled for and unnecessary bitter feeling created for the peremptory action of the Greenway Government, he says:—

"Now, far from gaining the concurrence of the people, the native half-breeds, the immigrant French, the immigrant French-Canadians, and all who look to the Roman Catholic clergy for light and leading, have been alienated. A sense of injustice, with all the bitter feelings connected therewith, has been engendered in natures naturally sensitive and generous. This is the result of legislating without regard to the facts of the case and of supposing that laws will execute themselves. The government has no power to initiate schools. All that power is in the hands of the people, in the townships and municipalities. To render them hostile to a school system is ready to make education impossible."

A phase of the question—and an important one—which has generally been overlooked, is the natural and rational predilection that the Catholics of Manitoba must have for the French language and system. This Principal Grant refers to, in his own way and after his own particular views upon the subject. Apart from his opinion regarding the superiority of one language over the other, the statement he makes is worthy of consideration. He says:—

"Thirdly, in condemning schools ought not the circumstances of the case to be taken into consideration? It is not easy to teach people who have, as yet, no great appreciation of the advantage of education, and it is not easy to teach English to children whose parents believe their own language and literature to be decidedly superior, and who will cherish the notion that there may be a French America. The notion is preposterous, but the only way of treating it is by ignoring it and allowing it to die out of the minds of those who entertain it on what seems to them sufficient grounds. Petty persecution, or what seems to them petty persecution, will only cause it take firmer root."

He is perfectly right that petty persecution can only result in producing the very opposite effects of those desired. As to the rest, the question is debatable, and may be considered from more than one standpoint. He is an English scholar criticising a Frenchman's ideas and preferences; he does so naturally from an English standpoint. In the next paragraph he tells a great truth. The circumstances of the case in 1890 and prior to that date are generally ignored. Principal Grant calls attention to them in the following words:—

"Instead, then, of charging the Roman Catholic clergy with being indifferent to education, we should remember the difficulties which they have always had to encounter in the North-West. They were to a large extent the pioneers of religion, civilization and education in the country, and their people are not likely to forget it nor to be ungrateful to them. Attacks on them from without will only

strengthen their power, and the more thoughtless and unjust these attacks are, the more will their people be consolidated."

We regret that the foregoing should be somewhat marred by the suggestion of justice combined with policy. "Honesty is the best policy" stands good in the case of Governments as well as in that of individuals, and justice and honesty go hand in hand. It is thus the able gentleman places his view before the public:—

"Policy and justice alike demand treatment of a very different kind, and in particular it would not be amiss to remember the golden rule in connection with all such cases. Whatever power the clergy of any denomination have in the present day, they have it solely in virtue of their people's belief in their goodness, their disinterestedness and their wisdom; and the people themselves must be left to find out whether or not they are infallible."

In other words, he means that it would have been a wiser policy for the Government to have allowed matters to stand as they were and that eventually the Catholic laity would find fault with the clergy; while, by its recent action, the Government has only strengthened the clergy through the concentration of lay influence around them. This portion of his letter we consider unworthy of the reverend gentleman's accustomed skill and fairness. Had he said that "justice demanded a treatment of a different kind," we would applaud with both hands; but we fear that the suggesting better treatment as an act of policy is not altogether in accord with principles heretofore expressed by the same writer.

Be that as it may; when we consider the difficulties that surrounded the early pioneers of Manitoba, the natural obstacles that had to be overcome, the lack of opportunity that the condition of the new country presented, and the recent development of that Province, it is only a wonder that the schools, five or more years ago, were as efficient as they were. Taking all these circumstances into consideration, we heartily re-echo the following very truthful and sage remark:—

"It seems to me that the Provincial Government of Manitoba in 1890 made a great mistake in summarily abolishing, instead of reforming, the old school system. They have been at war ever since with the prejudices, the feelings and even the religious convictions of a section of the population that deserved to be treated with the utmost consideration. They believe that the war would end if it was not supported from without, but on this point I venture to disagree with them. It will end only when they make concessions which, to the mass of the people interested, seem reasonable, and the sooner these are made the better."

Yes, the Manitoba Government "made a great mistake" from the standpoint of policy—as the reverend gentleman combines it with justice—and perpetrated a grave wrong when it undertook to abolish the schools. If they were inefficient, it was the duty of the Government to have them properly inspected, to have considered the fact that these schools were established in a virgin province and for a population the one part of which was occupied in colonizing and the other part in hunting and to have them raised to the standard required and in accord with the recent and exceptional development of the new country. The Catholic clergy and laity would have combined in helping the Government to carry out its educational reforms. But, unfortunately, it chose to act in another way.

Experimental farms are being established and agricultural instructors are appointed; what for? To assist the Colonist and the Indian in the cultivation of the land. The object is to train them in such a way that they may be enabled to derive the most possible benefit from the soil they possess and till. It is a grand and praiseworthy policy. How would it be if the Government instead of thus dealing with the less skillful tillers of the soil, were to say, "you are not instructed sufficiently, you don't understand the modern methods of agriculture, we can't help you, but we take your land from you." The injustice would be as glaring as the wisdom of the present system is obvious. The case is somewhat the same with the schools; the Manitoba Government said: "Your schools are not up to the standard we require, therefore we abolish them." A wise and just power would have said: "Your schools are not all that they should be, we will help you to improve them."

But despite all these arguments pro and con, we are now in presence of a question that should not depend upon what ought or ought not to have been done, but upon what is legal and constitutional. Facts exist; the schools were abolished in 1890, rightly or wrongly; was the Government of Manitoba justified in its action? and was an injustice done any section of the people? According to the highest tribunal in the realm the Government was wrong and an injustice perpetrated. According to an ancient and universally organized principle of our constitution, "whenever a wrong is done to any subject, or body of subjects, the power responsible for that wrong is equally bound to rectify it." The Privy Council of Great Britain declares against the Greenway Government on this question; the Constitution affords protection

to the wronged minority; all we Catholics ask is our Constitutional rights according to the law of the Empire.

BELIGIOUS UNITY.

The recently issued census bulletin of the United States contains complete statistics of the churches in that great republic. The figures are taken from 1890. According to that statement, there are over one hundred and fifty separate denominations or sects in the country. This list does not include the hundreds of independent religious organizations. In the regular denominations "there were, in 1890, 20,612,806 communicants, maintaining 165,177 separate organizations." The Catholic Church had then 6,231,417 communicants, which, of course, does not represent by any means the actual number of Catholics. Apart from the Catholics, we find the different faiths thus classed: The Methodist Episcopal Church with 2,240,354; regular Baptist (colored) 1,348,989; regular Baptist (South) 1,280,066; Methodist Episcopal (South) 1,209,976; Baptists (North), 800,025; Presbyterians (North), 788,224; Protestant Episcopal, 532,054; Congregational, 512,771; African Methodist Episcopal, 452,725; Lutheran General Council, 324,846; Lutheran Synodical conference, 357,153; Presbyterians (South), 179,721; Unitarians, 67,749; Universalists, 49,194; Mormons, 144,352; Jews, 130,496; Spiritualists, 45,030; Mennonites, 17,078; Christian Scientists, 8,724; Shakers, 1,728; Theosophists, 695; Friends, 102,647; Dunkards, 61,101; Seventh Day Adventists, 23,991; Salvation Army, 8,742; New Jerusalem, 7,095.

In glancing at this statement, while it is interesting to notice the great preponderance of the Catholic Church over each of the others, there is another reflection that naturally suggests itself to our mind. Where is the unity between all these various denominations. It is elementary that Truth cannot vary; it must necessarily be one. If, then, any one of the aforementioned sects possesses the Truth, the others must all have only a portion thereof, and consequently be in error. Again, unless the favored sect—if there be one—possesses the entire Truth, it also must be in error, for the slightest degree of error completely does away with the Truth. We would be glad to know upon what these various denominations propose to base the union of religions, of which they so often and so loudly preach. It seems to us that there is absolutely no point of contact, no centre around which they can rally, no connecting link that is sufficiently strong and sufficiently infallible to secure the permanency of that union—should it ever be attained.

It is very easy, so recent is the oldest of these sects, to trace its doctrines to their origin. We all know when, where and under what circumstances each of them became a religion. The oldest one cannot trace its history beyond three or four centuries back. Does the combination of all these varying denominations constitute what is called the Protestant Church? If so, they should be warned that a house divided against itself cannot stand. Or does each of them claim to be the Protestant Church? If so, there can be little hope of ever beholding a union amongst them, for it is improbable that any one sect will give up its title to true Protestantism in order to allow a more powerful or more numerous one to enjoy the distinction. The more we contemplate the facts before us, the more we are convinced that the days of Protestantism are numbered. It has had its spasmodic triumph almost immediately after its birth—ever since its tide has been on the ebb and its first huge breaker is being daily shattered, more and more, into fragments against the Rock upon which Christ built His Church.

What most surprises us is that the learned and logical gentlemen who compose the Protestant ministry cannot perceive how hopelessly adrift they all are. They seem to be rational and wise upon all other subjects; that of religion only appears to surround them with darkness.

We feel that the delegates from this Province to the Trades and Labor Congress, held last week in London, who voted against the introduction of the Socialist element into the organization, gave evidence of great common-sense, of sound principles and of honesty of purpose. They deserve the thanks of all right-thinking men in Canada. Socialism, in the mildest form, is a danger to the community, and its mask is never so well arranged as to cover entirely the features that menace. That the vote was one in favor of the Socialists by no means proves that they are desirable. Before the next annual convention is held—in Quebec—the Trades and Labor Council will be heartily tired of their new allies.

A CHINESE newspaper says that the real motive of the attacks on the missionaries in China was robbery. The missionaries had excited Chinese curiosity by building houses with basements, in which the ignorant natives supposed the foreigners stored treasures. We have read of so-called Christian people—equally barbaric if not as ignorant—who

destroyed monasteries and confiscated the Church property for the same purpose of robbery. An example may be found in the history of England, about the time of the pious King Henry VIII, and the immaculate Elizabeth. Another example was furnished twenty-five years ago in Italy. This month the infidel Government of that country will celebrate the quarter-centennial of the wholesale robbery perpetrated by the red-shirted brigand Garibaldi.

FIFTY YEARS DEAD.

Fifty years ago next Monday, on September 16, 1845, one of the most striking figures in Irish history disappeared forever from the eyes of men. Duffy, speaking of that gloomy and eventful day, said: "On the 16th we were shocked with the totally unexpected news of his death. I repaired to his house on Bagot street, and there I beheld the most tragic sight that my eyes ever rested upon—the dead body of Thomas Davis." Half a century has rolled away and the name of Davis is as potent amongst the children of the Celtic race to-day as it was during those three short years of his too brief career. Men die, but their works survive them. Free or bond, in happiness or in sorrow, the Irish people can never forget the services that Davis rendered to their cause. His poems will last as long as the language of the Saxon is spoken and his essays and journalistic work will produce grand results even for generations yet unborn. It is almost unnecessary that we should occupy any of the space we purpose devoting to a commemoration of a truly great man's death with cold details of a biographical nature. Every one of our readers is familiar with the life and works of Thomas Davis.

However, for the information of the few, we will state that he was born at Mallow, County Cork, October 14, 1814. For this reason has he been styled the "Minstrel of Mallow." He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and graduated in 1836. In 1838 he was called to the bar. Soon, however, he abandoned the practice of his legal profession and launched into journalism and politics. In 1842, he, Duffy, and Dillon, established the Nation, and from that hour until the day of his death he ceased not to fill its columns with editorials, essays, letters, poems and every imaginable kind of compositions, each of which was an exemplification in practice, of the precept he laid down—"educate that you may be free." In the full flush of manhood, at the very dawning of a most promising career, in the thirty-first year of his age, while his companions in letters were absent on a short vacation, while the whole load of the Nation rested upon his shoulders, he fell suddenly ill. During three days he sent his copy to the paper and with each instalment a note of encouragement and promise. On the 14th September he wrote that he would be at the office in two days. On the 15th he was slightly better; but that evening the fatal illness took an unfortunate turn, and on the morning of the 16th—while all the office staff expected to see the slight, lively, energetic little figure pop in and greet them—the most patriotic soul in all Ireland had fled and all that remained to the people he so loved were his ashes; but a glorious, wonderful, an incalculable legacy he left to the Irish race and the Irish cause—the magnificent gift of his works.

In the grey of a September morning thousands lined the streets of Dublin as the sorrowing friends carried his remains to Mount Jerome. There, beneath Hogan's master piece of sculpture, "on an Irish hill-side," have reposed and mouldered—during half a century—all that was frail and mortal of that powerful and immortal character. Space would not permit even an attempt at a review of his works; nor could we do justice, in forty columns of our paper, to the influence that this young man exercised upon the Irish cause in his day and the effects that his writings still produce. We will simply add to this short and imperfect tribute the opinions of others, who lived in his day, who knew the man, and who felt the magnetism of his presence. After the Nation was established its most bitter antagonist, in the journalistic sphere, was a fiery organ called the *Wardner*. When Davis was in all his glory, penning editorial and poem, slashing the enemies of Ireland and singing the glories of the land, there was nothing too bad for the *Wardner* to say of him. That he was recognized as a man to be respected and feared, to be loved and cherished, is evident from the language of that same *Wardner* when the news of his untimely and unexpected death became known. It is thus the *Wardner* wrote: "With a scholarship in general literature as well as in history and in politics, the extent of which was absolutely prodigious, Mr. Davis combined the finest and the noblest natural endowments of mind and disposition; he was a constant, earnest, and guileless honest labourer in the cause of his choice; and in its service he lavished, with the unreserve of conscious genius, the inexhaustible resources of his accomplished and powerful intellect, undebauched by the scheming of ambition—untainted by the rancor of faction; and if we pass by the errors of a wrongly chosen cause, he was

entitled to the noble name of patriot. Young though he died, his life had been long enough to impress the public with a consciousness of his claims upon their admiration and respect; his admirers were of all parties, and in none had he an enemy."

What man, what patriot, what writer, living or dead, has ever received a higher tribute? That an opponent should so estimate the character and acquirements of Davis, alone places him in an enviable but unique position. Had he lived there is no means of gauging the heights he might have attained; but never could he have left behind him a greater or more beloved name. In three years, from the day that he espoused the cause as an active worker in the journalistic sphere, until the hour of his death, he gave all he possessed—his heart, his mind, his acquired knowledge, his time, his labor—to the people and to their country; but, while apparently well, to all eyes active and gay, rushing around wherever his presence was required, constantly planning up new works, devising fresh methods, dreaming of poems calculated to stir the people into activity, pondering over themes that would, in their treatment, educate the race, still the fiercely-burning fire was consuming his young life and the keen blade of his fine spirit was wearing away the mortal scabbard that held it prisoner. Thus it was that no one of all his friends or co-workers saw the danger; not one perceived that their brilliant companion and chief was soon to sacrifice his life on the altar of patriotism.

On Christmas Eve, 1845, Sir Charles G. Duffy sat down to pen an introduction to a collection of essays and articles that Davis had written in the Nation. It was thus the great old patriot—then a young and rising *littérateur*—referred to his recently lost friend: "Neither his life nor writings need any defence, and the period of interpreting between him and the people has not yet come. It is not Death alone, but Time and Death that canonize the Patriot. We are still too near to see his proportions truly. The friends to whom his singularly noble and loveable character was familiar, and who knew all the great designs he was bringing to maturity, are in no fit condition to measure his intellectual force with a calm judgment. The people who knew him imperfectly, or not at all—for it was one of the practical lessons he taught the young men of his generation, to be chary of notoriety—have still to gather from his works whatever faint image of a true Great Man can be collected from books. Till they have done this, they will not be prepared to hear the whole truth of him. All he was, and might have become, they can never fully know; as it is, their unconsciousness of what they have lost impresses those who knew him with the pitying pain we feel for the indifference of a child to the death of his father."

"Students who will be eager to estimate him for themselves, must take in connection with his works the fact, that over the grave of this man, living only to manhood, and occupying only a private station, there gathered a union of parties, and a combination of intellect, that would have met round the tomb of no other man living, or who has lived in our time."

In April, 1846, a collection of his poems was sent forth, and a very able introduction to the volume—signed "T.W."—gives some of the finest traits of the dead bard's character. From this we will quote a few extracts, taken at haphazard amongst its pages. "All ranks of the people," he writes, "have much to learn before they can rightly appreciate what a treasure of hope and energy, of life and love, of greatness and glory for himself and them, lies buried in that untimely grave." * * * * "Fortunately Davis was not a statesman and political leader merely, but a thinker and a writer too—more than that, a genuine poet." * * * "He learned much; suffered much, I have no doubt; felt and sympathized much; and hoped and enjoyed abundantly; but he had not yet learned to rely upon himself." This explains how it was that Davis was twenty-seven or twenty-eight, before he commenced to exercise his hidden powers. Although never in active politics, he was the inspiration and support of others who drew upon his resources and made use of his acquirements to advance in life. His labor, theirs the recognition; but their future shore was often oblivion, while his was immortality. "The rapidity and thrilling power with which, from the time that he got full access to the public ear, Davis developed his energies as statesman, political writer and poet, has been well described elsewhere. It excited the surprise and admiration of those who knew him best, and won the respect of numbers, who, from political or personal prejudices, had been originally most unwilling to admit his worth." * * * * "This was the true guarantee of his greatness—of a genius which was equal to any emergency, which would have been constantly placing itself in new aspects, overcoming new difficulties, and winning fresh love and honor from his countrymen and from mankind." * * * "None of his writings, either in prose or verse, will enable the world to know him thoroughly." * * * * "Literary

pre-eminence was not his ambition at all, and even usefulness through the channels of literature but one of the many means which he shaped to one great end.

One more and a final quotation before we bid a fresh *adieu* to the great and good man whose name is as familiar today as it was fifty years ago. "But though great man, wise man, kingly man, cannot but be few, good men and true men need not be so scarce as they are—men, I mean, true to their own convictions, and prompt in their country's need—not greedy of distinction, but knowing well the hived sweetness that abides in an unnoticed life—and yet not shrinking from responsibility, or avoiding danger, when the hour of trial comes. It is such men that this country needs, and not flaunting histrionists, or empty platform patriots. She wants men who can and will work as well as talk. Men glad to live, and yet prepared to die. For Ireland is approaching her majority, and what she wants is men."

These words are as true to-day as they were fifty years ago. Often in examining closely the work and hidden grandeur of Davis, we are prompted to repeat those lines of McGee:—

"O, inspire! giant! shall we e'er behold,
In our own time,
One fit to speak your spirit on the world,
Or seize your rhyme?
One pupil of the past, as mighty should
As in the prime,
Were the fond, fair, and beautiful, and bold—
They, of your songs sublime!"

Not in our day, we fear, will we witness another Thomas Davis. Then, in the absence of a successor to the gifted patriot and bard, let us resolve to read his works, to draw inspiration from his songs, to learn lessons of patriotism in his essays, to glean principles for our practice from his splendid, but all too brief, life. Thus will we be doing honor to the dead and service to the living, paying the grandest tribute of respect and admiration to the departed, and fulfilling a duty towards the cause and people of his love.

A GENTLEMAN, whose opinion we most highly value, has written us to say that he considers our "special pleading" in the last two numbers of **THE TRUE WITNESS** as worthy of a person "learned in the law." Perhaps our legal training and a few years of practice in the profession may have had some influence upon our method of treating certain subjects; but we must say that the articles referred to were not the result of any pre-determination to find plausible arguments. It is true that "two blacks don't make a white," and the fact of the Ontario Commissioners' report not being faultless by no means rectifies the flaws in the teaching of which it complains. But this does not alter the other fact, that the report was couched in general terms and not one line was written to show that it had reference to a local and isolated case. The report did not, it is true, expressly state that its censure extended to the whole Order of the Christian Brothers, but it gave ample opportunity to the non-Catholic press of Canada, and of the United States, to draw that conclusion and to make use of it to the injury of one of the foremost bodies of educators on the continent. An injustice is an injustice, no matter how it may be excused or proped up.

We read in an American contemporary the following:—

In an interview in San Francisco Rev. Francis Barnum, S.J., who has lately returned from Alaska, the scene of his missionary labors, warns the Government against the continued encroachments of the British upon American soil in our northwesternmost territory. He says that England is determining for herself a new boundary line between British Columbia and Alaska. He adds: "Unless we have gunpower we shall lose an immense slice of southeastern Alaska. They will steal Glacier Bay and some grand harbors."

Here is a Catholic priest—and a Jesuit at that—a citizen of the United States and a missionary, who warns the Republic of the dangers that menace American possessions in the far northern lands where he had done service as an envoy of Christ. What has the A.P.A. to say to this? Perhaps Father Barnum is a hidden enemy of American institutions. How many of those blatant, loud-mouthed, ignorant "Protectors of the Republic Institutions of the United States," will undertake a trip to Alaska—either in the service of religion or that of the State?

In MEXICO, a boy who twice put stones on a railroad track, to upset trains, was tried, convicted, sentenced to death, and executed. This may seem pretty severe; but certainly it was a well-deserved punishment, and a very striking example. The Mexican law seems to agree with the old proverb that "an ounce of preventative is worth a pound of cure."

Even Daiber, the public executioner, is now agitating for the abolition of capital punishment in France, or for some change in the methods by which it may be rendered less terrible. We do believe that decapitation is altogether too barbaric and revolting a method of execution. The ends of justice can surely be attained in some other way. Death in itself is sufficiently fearful, without adding to its horrors by bloodshed.