

The True Witness

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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EPISCOPAL APPROBATION.

If the English speaking Catholics of Montreal and of this Province consulted their best interests, they would soon make of the "True Witness" one of the most prosperous and powerful Catholic papers in this country. I heartily bless those who encourage this excellent work.

† PAUL, Archbishop of Montreal.

SATURDAY.....JUNE 11, 1898.

MR. SHARKEY AND THE
HARBOR COMMISSIONERS.

A perusal of the voluminous correspondence which has passed between Mr. Michael Sharkey, late foreman of dredges, and the Montreal Harbor Commissioners, and which we are sorry we are unable to publish owing to considerations of space, demonstrates beyond any ground for reasonable doubt that that widely esteemed and highly respected Irish Catholic citizen has suffered a shameless and cynical injustice at the hands of that public body—an injustice which Mr. Robert Mackay, the Chairman of the Board, has vainly tried to palliate on the hollow pretence of "no sectionalism in the Commissioners' affairs."

A few extracts will serve to put the whole question in a strong, clear light. In the annual report of the Harbor Commissioners for 1890 there occurs the following passage: "The position of mechanical engineer, vacated by the death, last winter, of A. B. Savigny, was not filled, Mr. Kennedy having undertaken to perform the duties himself. Subsequently, it was deemed expedient to make a change, and Mr. Michael Sharkey was appointed foreman of dredges." This promotion, which was considered sufficiently important to be accorded the unaccustomed distinction of being referred to in the annual report, brought with it an increase in Mr. Sharkey's salary up to \$1200 a year. At the time the new appointment was made Mr. Sharkey had been in the Commissioners' service for twenty-four years, and he was justified in believing that his new appointment was to be as permanent as his previous one.

In September, 1897, the Gazette's report of the meeting of the Harbor Commissioners contained an item to the effect that Mr. Kennedy, the chief engineer, had reported the sinking and raising of Dredge No. 6, attributing the accident to an error in judgment on the part of the engineer. The report was accepted. Mr. Sharkey, to whose charge the "error in judgment" had been laid, at once wrote to the Commissioners a letter, which was read at their next weekly meeting, and in which Mr. Sharkey declared there had been no error of judgment on his part, but that the accident had been caused by the tugs that had the dredges in tow starting before the customary signal had been given. At the same meeting, Mr. Kennedy, in reply to a question put by Mr. Lemay, one of the Commissioners, stated that he had given Mr. Sharkey a month's notice to terminate his engagement, giving as his reason the assertion that the dredges were going out of commission. He added that the dismissal was in no way connected with the accident to Dredge No. 6.

The Hon. Dr. Guérin, on October 6th, 1897, wrote to the Commissioners expressing a hope that no injustice would be done to Mr. Sharkey, and that the Board would accord Mr. Sharkey a hearing; and it was agreed by the Board to grant him a hearing.

On March 1st, 1898, after numerous letters had passed between him and Mr. Sharkey, the Secretary of the Board wrote to Mr. Sharkey, informing him that the Board had decided to let him know that no blame was imputed to him on account of the sinking of Dredge No. 6.

On March 9th, 1898, Mr. Sharkey received the following note from Chief Engineer Kennedy:—

"I am authorized to give you employment on one of the dredges at the same

rate of pay as you received last summer."

This note effectually disposes of the pretence of Mr. Robert Mackay, Chairman of the Board, that motives of economy had determined the dismissal of Mr. Sharkey. Mr. Kennedy's letter proves that the Board had no desire to reduce Mr. Sharkey's salary, but simply wished to reduce his rank.

Mr. Sharkey, on March 15th, wrote to Mr. Kennedy, accepting the position, believing, naturally, that the position was an annual one, the same as he had had the previous year. What has occurred subsequently is fresh in the minds of the readers of THE TRUE WITNESS. After thirty years of faithful and efficient service, Mr. Sharkey, in the prime of life, was discharged—a high-handed and indefensible proceeding, which violates the general rule which has always governed the relations of employer and employed—that a man who has for many years given faithful and capable service should never be dismissed without cause, so long as he was fully fitted to perform his duties.

The question that now arises is this: What are the Irish Catholics of Montreal going to do in the matter? We have proved that Mr. Robert Mackay's assertions about "sectionalism" and "economy" had no foundation. It is strange that this cry of "sectionalism" is always raised when Irish Catholics complain of injustice. Knowing their trustful nature, and their proneness to be lulled and unperceiving in their resentment, politicians of both parties have hitherto succeeded in warding off their anger by the use of soft words. It is time that we closed up our ranks and offered determined opposition to every candidate for public positions who has exhibited any bigotry towards us.

St. Patrick's League deserves great credit for the manner in which they have brought the injustice done to Mr. Sharkey before the Irish Catholics of the city; and we hope that they will not allow the matter to rest in the unsatisfactory position in which it at present stands. For our part, we believe that there is only one way to deal with it; and that is for the League, backed up by all the Irish National Societies, to organize a deputation to the Harbor Commissioners, composed of not half a dozen or a several hundred men, and they should take with them a monster Irish Catholic petition, signed throughout our five parishes. If no other immediate result were obtained, it would be the means of shewing what our voting strength in the city is. The correspondence relating to the Sharkey case should be printed in pamphlet form and circulated broadcast throughout our parishes. And when the day of election comes near, our people should start an organized opposition to every candidate, no matter what his politics or his nationality may be, who merits rebuke at their hands.

THE BANK OF MONTREAL.

Elsewhere we publish in this issue a report of the annual meeting of the Shareholders and Directors of the Bank of Montreal. The figures indicate even greater prosperity on the part of the bank than it experienced during the previous year. The profits enabled the Directors not only to pay the usual annual dividend of ten per cent., but to carry forward to the balance of profit and loss account the enormous sum of \$352,210 47. As the Bank of Montreal has for years been the reliable trade barometer of the Dominion, the prosperity of which the balance sheet and the annual report furnish indisputable proof is a matter for general public rejoicing, since when this great financial institution flourishes, the whole country flourishes also. There was only one exception to the general rule of prosperity in Canada during the year that ended on April 30th, and this was in the lumber trade. Mr. Clouston, the General Manager, in his interesting address, ascribed the unsatisfactory condition of this industry to the overstocked state of foreign markets, to the cessation of the demand in the United States, and the failure of Canadian lumbermen to limit sufficient. Their cut during the year. In every other field of industry enhanced trade was noted, particularly in farm products.

Mr. Clouston expressed the opinion that the action of the government in reducing the rate of interest in the Government Savings Bank to 2½ per cent was "a wise and a businesslike" step. Alluding to the war between Spain and the United States he pointed out that up to the time war seemed inevitable the rate for call money in the United States ruled low, and even when war broke out it only advanced to firmness for a short time, as the credit balances established in Europe by the immense balance of trade in its favor prevented any great stringency. It is worth while noting the figures of this balance of trade. On the 30th April the balance of trade for ten months in favor of the United States amounted to the enormous sum of \$514,000,000, whereas in no previous full fiscal year in its history had they attained \$300,000,000. At present the rate for call money in the United States is merely

nominal, though it remains to be seen what effect the replenishing of the coffers of the treasury, drained by the expense of the war, will have on the market.

As to the prospects for Canadian trade in the current year, Mr. Clouston's tone was, we are glad to observe, one of confidence in a continuance of the progress that was made in the past one.

HELP FOR THE OLD LAND.

Ottawa has taken prompt action in starting a fund for the suffering peasants in Ireland. At a public meeting called by and presided over by Mayor Bingham a few days ago \$350 was collected. This, of course, is but a beginning; but it is a very good one. It is time that Montreal took some practical steps in the same direction. Mayor Préfontaine would, we feel sure, be quite as willing to call a public meeting as was Mayor Bingham. A large and influential committee could be appointed at the meeting for the purpose of collecting subscriptions. We have already dwelt upon the urgent necessity that exists for immediate financial assistance. All that we would now say would be: remember the old motto, that he gives twice who gives promptly.

FATHER STRUBBE'S JUBILEE.

The spiritual power of the pastor is ever reflected in the religious condition of his flock; and, judged by this standard, the Rev. Father Strubbe, C.S.S.R., of St. Ann's, in this city, amply deserved all the praises which were spoken about him by his parishioners on the occasion of the celebration by him on Tuesday evening of the silver jubilee of his life as a priest. A full report of these interesting proceedings will be found in another part of the TRUE WITNESS. Father Strubbe has been with us since 1884, when he came here from Belgium, with the Rev. Father Catulle and three other Redemptorist priests, to take charge of St. Ann's parish. Of that devoted little band of five zealous priests he alone remains now in Montreal. He was born in the city of Bruges, Belgium, half a century ago. After finishing his elementary studies he entered the seminary of Rulers, where he studied philosophy, and where, it may be of interest to add, he first made the acquaintance of Father Catulle. He was ordained at the Seminary of Bruges on June 7, 1873, by Bishop Faict. Shortly afterwards he was appointed Master of Discipline in the Catholic College of Thielt, of which he was a little later promoted to be Principal, a responsible position which he filled with distinction for nine years. That missionary spirit, of which we in Montreal and those who belong to other dioceses in this Province have for years known the strength and the fruitfulness, had already begun to influence his thoughts and make a claim upon his activities; and he left the academic halls of the Thielt College and joined the well known Order of the Most Holy Redeemer. This was in 1882. Next year he took the vows of the Order, and the year following he came to Montreal.

As a pastor, Father Strubbe has been a model of zeal, energy and administrative capacity. The good work he has performed in St. Ann's has entailed labors and sacrifices and cares of which he himself and his Divine Master are alone aware, for, with all his energy, he is ever unassuming and unostentatious. We see the wonderful result of his work in the practical Catholic lives of the people of St. Ann's parish, in the high moral plane on which its young men move, and the noble ambition which animates so many of them—an ambition generated by the enthusiasm which he so readily communicates to others—and in the temperance movement which has taken such a firm hold upon the parish. As a preacher, a temperance apostle, or a missionary, his discourses are always marked by that highest and most inspiring kind of eloquence which is born of sincerity and zeal. The esteem and admiration in which he is held by his Irish parishioners is greatly enhanced by the fact that in all matters concerning the interests of their nationality, whether as Irish-Canadians or as members of a race whose motherland is struggling to be free, Father Strubbe has shown himself to be more Irish than the Irish themselves.

THE NEW YORK HERALD'S
EDITORIAL SERMONS.

One of the new "features" of the New York Herald is the publication in its Sunday edition of an editorial sermon, signed "George H. Hepworth." The management of the Herald have not stated whether the editorial sermon was decided upon in order to entertain, to amuse, or to edify the readers of that newspaper. Probably it is inserted merely as an attraction. If this be the case the Herald deserves severe condemnation for both trifling and trafficking in religion; and the writer of the articles should be still more severely censured, because he claims to be a minister of religion. The only purpose these sermon-editorials in the Herald

have so far served is to amuse the scoffers at religion, and to shock the spiritual sensibilities of such of its readers as hold Christianity in reverence as a religion founded by the Son of God. He speaks of the Deity in terms so familiar and, at the same time, ridiculous, as to border upon blasphemy; and, instead of rising to clear ideas of religion, he sinks to the use of vague and senseless phrases which are calculated only to obfuscate the readers.

Here is a sample phrase of his from the Herald of last Sunday: "God is a spiritually tangible presence to be daily consulted as you would consult your best friend." He might just as well have said 'to be consulted like your lawyer.' The statement is meaningless where it is not irrelevant. Again he says: "You are like a ship sailing in a dense fog. Your compass is broken." Now, fog does not break a compass. The ship sailing in a fog finds the compass to be of great service. Then he delivers himself thus:

"I know that I am telling you about a very hard truth, but in spite of its hardness it is the truth. If things are bad they are made worse by brooding over them, and they can be made better by facing them, in the proper spirit. In my opinion that is religion. That is what the Christ came to teach us."

No doubt Mr. Hepworth believes that he has succeeded here in putting religion into a nutshell. "In my opinion," he says. But what is his opinion worth on the question of religion or of what Christ came to teach us? Another sermon-editorial writer might say, in his opinion, Mr. Hepworth's opinion about religion was wrong. And he would have as much right to his opinion. The man or woman who would accept as a religious truth Mr. Hepworth's opinion would certainly be like a ship sailing in a dense fog that never lifted.

The trouble with Protestants is that they can never be induced to dissociate their private judgment from religious truth. They think their own individual convictions must necessarily be true. This is why so many Protestant sects and sub-sects exist.

LORD SALISBURY'S
"MANACLES AND
MANITOBA."

Mr. C. R. Devlin, the Chief Dominion Immigration Commissioner to Ireland, has written a letter of remonstrance to the Evening Telegraph, of Dublin, because that newspaper had attacked Lord Salisbury for treating the sad conditions which prevail in several parts of Ireland with the insulting policy of "Manacles and Manitoba." Mr. Devlin very properly and effectively objected to the connection sought to be made between Manacles and our great prairie province.

In the course of his letter he says:

"It would be difficult indeed to throw more odium upon a country than to link its name with the word manacles. There are many hundreds and perhaps thousands of our countrymen in Manitoba who have established there happy homes. If I mistake not, many of them proceeded thither as a result of an erudite article which was written in the Freeman's Journal by the late Archbishop Lynch of Toronto. And although you speak of 'Manacles and Manitoba' in the one breath, I am not aware of the thousands of Irishmen living in Manitoba having returned—no, not one has returned. More than that, it is a fact that leading Catholic societies in Manitoba, north and west territories of Canada, zealous priests, with the full approbation of their bishops, are making strenuous efforts to induce those of their faith to take up the marvellously fertile lands of Manitoba and the North-West Territories in preference to settlement in the larger cities and towns. Elsewhere in the same issue of your paper you deplore the fact that so many young Irishmen enlist in the English army; you tell them, bad as emigration is, rather than enlist better for them to go to the States. If you added 'or to Canada,' how grateful we would feel! Just now the States do not seek population, whereas Canada does; the States place many difficulties in the way of the intending settler, Canada does not. And, after all, Canada is a fair field for the Irish Catholic. He may there aspire to any position. The strength and influence of the Irish people of Canada must be counted with in the formation of governments. It would be a matter for general outcry were the Dominion Cabinet formed without an Irish Catholic. Just now the Premier of Canada is a Roman Catholic French Canadian, and two of his colleagues, the Secretary of State and the Solicitor General, are Irish Catholics. The Minister of Public Works for Ontario is one; so is the Honourable Dr. Guérin, of the Quebec Government, and so on. In Canada you will find your countrymen on the Bench, and indeed occupying leading positions in every branch and work of life, distinguished in the liberal professions, at the top of the ladder in trade, commerce, sciences, agriculture, arts, etc. I mention all this to show that Canada offers to the man seeking a home outside his own country at least as fair a field as the United

States or any on the face of the globe. Of course I have laid particular stress in regard to Irish Catholics!

The Evening Telegraph, commenting editorially on Mr. Devlin's letter, makes the following very sensible remarks, which, coming from so influential a journal, must have a powerful effect upon intending immigrants from Ireland belonging to the Catholic faith:

"The Canadian Commissioner, who writes us an interesting letter to-day on the subject of a recent article, in which we referred to Lord Salisbury's policy of 'Manacles and Manitoba,' rather misunderstands the purport of our observations. We intended to denounce the twin remedy of coercion and emigration as a means of settling the Irish question, and not in any way to depreciate Canada as a field for the Irish immigrant. The phrase 'Manacles and Manitoba' has unfortunately come to be regarded as briefly descriptive of Lord Salisbury's famous policy, but our correspondent may feel assured that alliterations had a good deal more to do with the birth of that phrase than any hostility to Manitoba or to Canada as a whole. On the contrary we quite believe that at the present moment Canada is a much better field for the Irish emigrant than the United States. Of the treatment of our people in the Dominion we have nothing to say that is not praiseworthy. As Mr. Devlin says, Irish Catholics have there risen to higher positions, and the fact that three Catholics, two of them Irish, are members of the present Canadian Government is a proof of that fact. Indeed, as regards the high positions of State, the Irish have been more favored in Canada than in the States, and far be it from us to say anything which might be construed as an obstruction to the work of Mr. Devlin in trying to secure as large a proportion as possible of Irish emigrants for the Dominion. We would prefer our people to stay at home altogether, but if they will not or cannot stay, we are convinced that as warm a welcome, and as good, if not better, prospects await them in Canada as in any part of the globe."

PRISON REFORM IN ENGLAND.

One of the most glaring cruelties that has ever defaced the escutcheon of the British Army was the practice of flogging. Men who had gone through the fire of murderous battles, who stayed stolidly in square at Quatre Bras, while thunderous columns of steel clad cavalry were launched against them, men who climbed the heights of Alma in face of a frightful fire, men who made heroes of themselves in the death pit of Balaklava—men on whose memories honors are cast now with an unthinking hand—these men who were making an Empire were subject to the lash for the slightest breach of discipline or at the caprice of an officer.

The brutal custom is abolished now and to whom is the credit due? To the late lamented Charles Stewart Parnell and his lieutenants, whose grasp of the bounds of freedom and humanity were not confined to their own country. To Parnell the British soldier has right to be thankful. And now again suffering if even erring humanity will have another opportunity to bless the fact that Irishmen have still some scope even in the Imperial Parliament.

Next to flogging in the army and navy, the most dispicable, the most cruel, the most degrading system of punishment is at present in vogue in the English prisons. It is not here desired to express any sympathy for the criminal. For the ordinary offender who may only be legally a criminal the lack of liberty, the mere confinement in nearly all cases would suffice. We are not speaking of the class which modern scientists and psychologists generalize as "degenerate." But the English prison system, from its mere methods, tends to pervert a mere offender into a "degenerate" criminal.

It is the recognition of this fact that has brought about amendments to the Prisons Bill in the House of Commons by Mr. Michael Davitt, and here again, following in the footsteps of Mr. Parnell, will the British public have reason to thank an Irish member for the alleviation of an official abuse, which in the past has made erring men infamous and turned bright scholarly men into drivelling imbeciles. On this question an Irish exchange says:—

"Instead of the tinkering amendments at first contemplated, which left the root of the evil absolutely untouched, the reforms now proposed amount practically to a complete revolution in the present degrading and inhuman system. The new rules which the Home Secretary is drafting cannot be ready for some time, but the recommendations of the Grand Committee on Law, who have the Bill now before them, leave no doubt that in future prison life will be far different from what it has been in the past—more humane in character, and more beneficial and more permanent in result. As a result of the many reforms to be introduced, the convicts will not only have better food, but their period of torture on the plank bed will be reduced to the absurd obligation of secrecy will be

considerably relaxed, if not altogether abolished; and tread-mill and crank labor will be done away with in so far as any rate as they are unproductive. These innovations, if not the maximum of what is desired, will undoubtedly go a very long way to mitigating the useless severity of the present barbarous and demoralizing system. For this service the public of the United Kingdom are in the most part indebted to the Irish members."

But, better than all this, their manhood, their self-respect, will not be ground out of them to the hideous monotone of a useless treadmill or the frightful silence of the dungeon, that excludes God's light and makes a maniac of a man.

OUR NATIONAL GAME.

It is difficult to understand the volatile nature of some of the writers on the daily press who propose to educate the public up to the proper way of thinking in the matter of athletics. They seem like feathers of dandelion blown about in divers directions by every passing breeze. There is nothing permanent or tangible or consistent in the dandelion's duffy white head any more than there is in the heads of the people whose writings play for popularity, and seek in a small measure to attain this end by belittling the national game, which for so many years has been held in the first place in Canada's athletic heart by the Shamrock Lacrosse Club.

Every opportunity is taken to point out the fact that the Montreal Baseball Club is a thing of beauty, but even the sporting writers doubt very much whether it is going to be a joy forever. Why, in the first place, should it be called a Montreal Club? An evening contemporary redundantly delights in speaking of "our own Dooley." Mr. Dooley, no doubt, is a very estimable person, a nice conversationalist, a good baseball player and all that; but he is not a Montreal man. Messrs. Jacklitz, Smith, Shearon, Souders, Miner, are also good men and true, but their names are not to be found in a Montreal directory any more than the rest of the players. Not a single player is a native or resident of Montreal except during the playing season, and in the face of this good people are called upon to become enthusiastic and cheer for Montreal, when there is not a Montrealese in the whole aggregation!

The fact that a stock company sends an inharmonious band harnessed to a street car to disturb people in the evenings seems all that is necessary to make baseball "go." It is a pitiable comment on the good sense of our journalists.

On the other hand, lacrosse is distinctly our national game. It is Canadian above all things, and the teams playing represent the towns or cities whose names they bear. They play for an innate love of the game, not for a stock company; they are the best exponents of its great beauties in the world, and they will have a following when new-fangled rounders, imported Americans, uproarious rooters and obsequious newspaper writers will have been forgotten.

The lacrosse match of last Saturday did not have an unexpected ending, for during many years past the Toronto Lacrosse Club has not been a drawing card in Montreal, and their playing strength seems to be greatly developed when at home. It is not last Saturday's game to which particular reference now is desirable.

It is the great interest suddenly taken by our French-Canadian citizens in the game that is referred to. While Toronto was a known quantity of little interest, the Nationals have sprung into the breach and roused a public enthusiasm in quarters where previously lacrosse has seldom been heard of.

With the National defeat of Cornwall the status of the French-Canadian team was established. The English element some years ago had not the nerve to continue the struggle in the face of acknowledging great difficulties. The Shamrocks held on with the tenacity of bulldogs, and now they are joined in the struggle by their French Canadian friends. As far as senior honors are concerned, the English element seems to be enjoying that much lauded sentiment of "splendid isolation." Some of the younger members seem to have appreciated the fact, and, in preference to playing no lacrosse at all, formed a three-cornered intermediate league.

All of which goes to show that lacrosse is the country's game, that interjections of other games are merely spasmodic, and that lacrosse will prosper when baseball will be as extinct as a dead dodo.

The annual procession of Corpus Christi will take place to-morrow. The procession will leave the Church of Notre Dame at nine a.m., and the route of the procession will be as follows: Through Place d'Armes square and hill, St. Ursula, Dorchester, St. Alexander and La Gauchetière streets to St. Patrick's Church, thence through La Gauchetière street, Beaver Hall Hill, Victoria square, St. James street and Place d'Armes square, back to the Church of Notre Dame.