

## THE TRUE WITNESS

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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WEDNESDAY.....DECEMBER 14, 1892

## MONTREAL CENTRE.

By the proclamation issued last week we learn that the electors of Montreal Centre are called upon to return a representative for their division to the Federal parliament of Canada. Hon. Mr. Curran having accepted the position of Solicitor-General of Canada, has thereby rendered it necessary that he should seek re-election. Since 1882 the new minister has been the worthy and energetic representative of that division, and the fidelity with which he performed the duties of his post of trust, and the manner in which his tireless exertions in behalf of his constituency have been appreciated, could not be more emphatically expressed than in the immense majorities with which Montreal Centre has always returned him to Parliament. This time, for a great many reasons, we hope—and hope most sincerely—that he will be returned by acclamation.

For twenty five years, since confederation, the Irish Catholics of this Province have had no representative in the Federal Ministry. For geographical exigencies the late Hon. Mr. McGee, was crowded out in 1867, and from that time until Hon. Mr. Curran succeeded in getting his hand upon the cabinet door, no one of our fellow-countrymen, from this Province, has had even the shadow of a chance of establishing a fair and just precedent. With that object firmly fixed before him, the new Solicitor General fought on a thousand hustings, wrote, travelled, sacrificed time, profession, ease, and everything in order to pave a way for his people. With that purpose before him he declined a judgeship, he gave up all the comforts with which such an assured position would surround his life: he battled on, never hesitating, never wavering, never turning aside. And during all that political wrestling in the great public arena, he ever and always found time to listen to and to help all who came to him, to travel up and down to Ottawa, to plead the cause of each one of his constituents who had recourse to him; all this without a selfish thought and without hesitation.

To-day he has entered the ministry, he has broken the ice-barrier that seemingly was destined to freeze us out for all time. He now stands inside the portico of the great political temple, it is but a step and he will be within the most secret arcana. Were he to never take that last step he has done already sufficient to efface the blank that threatened to be endless; but it is only a question of a very short time until promotion will follow appointment.

The office of Solicitor-General is the second highest to which a legal professional gentleman can aspire. It is second only to the Attorney-General, or Minister of Justice and in this case its importance is enhanced by the fact of the At-

torney-General being the Premier of the Dominion. It is an enviable office and one to which the ablest and best in the land might proudly aspire. To-day the first incumbent of that important ministerial office is the worthy, genial, talented gentleman, who, for a whole decade, has so splendidly represented Montreal Centre. While congratulating Hon. Mr. Curran upon this giant step upward and forward along the political highway, we also wish to congratulate the electors of Montreal Centre upon the honor that has fallen to the one they had chosen, and upon the vastly extended field of influence and usefulness, that has broadened out before him and consequently to their greater prospects and future benefit.

Let us express a sincere hope! We trust, and not without a confidence that our trust is well founded, that next Wednesday at 2 o'clock in the afternoon the Hon. J. J. Curran will be elected, by acclamation for Montreal Centre.

Any opposition must be absolutely vexatious. No one could seriously entertain the idea of defeating him; and even the Irish Catholic who would succeed (were it possible) in tripping him on the threshold of a ministerial career, would be slandering the door in the face of his own people and holding it forever. In fact we do not think that any one of our creed and nationality would be mean enough, so blinded by party prejudice as to inscribe his name upon the page of our political history as one who preferred self-interest to national representation, and who was ready to gain notoriety at the expense of his every patriotic sentiment, not to say instinct. We are not now discussing, nor do we ever intend to discuss the purely political aspects of the present situation, but we hope to be able to congratulate the Liberal party, and especially the truly liberal-minded Irish Catholic Liberals upon their generous course upon this occasion. It will ever redound to their credit; and should their party some day come into power, they will know the value of the precedent established by Hon. J. J. Curran.

## ANNIVERSARIES.

During the past few months we have recalled to our readers a few of the striking anniversaries that are not commemorated, not even thought of by the vast majority of the people. In the month of December many events, that have had considerable influence in shaping history took place. On the first of December, 1844, the Princess of Wales was born; on the second, 1852, Napoleon III. performed the famous *corp d'Etat* in Paris; on the 3rd December, 1719, St. Paul's Cathedral in London was consecrated; on the 4th, 1839, George Peckham died; on the 5th, 1895, the famous battle of Antwerp was fought, the most glorious and most decisive victory ever won by Napoleon I.; on the 6th, 1837, the Canadian Rebellion commenced; on the 7th, 1684, Algonquin Sidney was beheaded; on the 8th, 1854, Pope Pius IX. proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception; on the 9th, 1608, John Milton, the greatest of modern epic poets was born; on the 10th, 1577, Havana was captured by the Russians; on the 11th, 1757, the notorious preacher and former of a peculiar sect, Charles Wesley, was born; on the 12th, 1653, the still more notorious Oliver Cromwell, was declared Protector; on the 13th, 1545, the great council of Trent was opened; and to-day, the 14th is the fourteenth anniversary of the death of Princess Alice.

Looking forward from to-day we notice even more striking anniversaries during the remaining part of the month. To-morrow, the 15th, is the thirty-first

anniversary of the death of Prince Albert; on the 16th, 1786, the great composer Von Weber was born; on the 17th, 1862, the official abolition of slavery in the United States was announced; on the 19th, 1840, the Blockade of Canton, in China, took place; on the 20th, 1848, Louis Napoleon was crowned Emperor of the French; on the 21st, the church celebrates the feast of St. Thomas, one of the brightest lights in the firmament of history; on the 23rd, 1880, George Eliot, the famous female novelist died; on the 23rd, 1642, Sir Isaac Newton, the greatest natural philosopher of modern times, was born; on the 24th, 1814, the Treaty of Ghent was signed; the 25th, Christmas—this event requires no comment; the 26th, the feast of St. Stephen, when the boys in the old country went hunting the wren in the hedges and bushes:

"The wren, the wren, the king of all birds,  
 St. Stephen's day was caught in the furze;  
 Although he is little his honor is great,  
 Get up land-lady and give us a treat."

on the 27th, the feast of St. John the Evangelist; on the 28th, 1879, the great Tay Bridge disaster occurred; on the 29th, 1807, W. E. Gladstone was born; on the 30th, 1534, the Jesuit Order was founded, and the last day of December, this year, is the tenth anniversary of the death of France's greatest modern orator Gambetta.

## COLONIZATION.

Elsewhere we publish an extract from a circular letter that His Grace Archbishop Fabre issued to his clergy and in which he speaks most encouragingly of agriculture and colonization; the week before last we gave our readers a lengthy article upon the question of colonizing that grand and promising country around Lake Timagami. Taking His Grace's timely remarks as a text we will say a few words more, this week, upon a subject that is as vast as our territory and as fertile as our soil.

Very naturally, at the outset, the question might be asked: "how comes it that in the very heart of our country, at a short distance from any of our principal cities, such a wonderful new region, as that which you describe could possibly exist, and exist without that any of our colonizing people ever found their way there?" Pertinent as the question is, simple is the answer. Along the two great water highways, the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa, the fur hunters, the ambler-traders and the voyagers travelled. At an angle of several degrees do the valleys of these two great rivers run. For a few miles on either side of the lines marked by their courses the cultivators of the soil set up their tents; the tributaries of these two streams the hunter and the trapper went. But following a perpendicular line, midway between these two rivers, a line due west from the St. Lawrence is ascended in a westerly direction and the Ottawa runs north westerly, one—no person ever dreamed of there existing a country so attractive, so rich, and as valuable as any other portion of our Dominion.

A few years ago Manitoba was to us the land of the savage and the buffalo; to-day it seems to be at our very door. Between the Provinces of Quebec and Manitoba there is apparently a vast chasm; yet some place or other they must draw near to each other, for the mountain forests of the one go westward and the undulating prairies of the other come towards the east. This region of which we speak, this arm of the great province of Ontario, this Nipissing district under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of good Bishop O'Connor of Peterborough, this land where the sun flashes on Lake Timagami, the *el dorado* of Rev. Father Paradis' explorations, is the hyphen that

connects Manitoba and Quebec, and lies exactly upon that line, half way between the valleys of the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa.

To-day the whistle of the steam-engine is heard along the confines of that region, to-morrow the snort of the iron-horse will awaken the echoes of its hills. Its waters are pure and fish-abounding; its mountains are still covered with majestic forests of pine, spruce, birch and elm; its valleys are fertile beyond description and in their virgin state the vegetation is almost tropical in its luxuriance; and beneath all that, hidden away from the eye of the traveller what wealth for millions yet unborn! Mark these crystalline formations, those vast strata of fossiliferous rocks, endless beds of micaceous and syenitic gneiss, hornblende, and quartzite with interstratified bands of limestone, and perhaps oxidized iron ores; those veins indicative of untold wealth;—then look aloft, at those giant pines, the sentinels over the buried treasures of the earth, pointing, like the spires of an everlasting temple, to the blue empyrean, based upon earth but piercing the heavens, cease to wonder, cease to conjecture, be silent and patiently wait.

Soon the tramp of civilization's vanguard will be heard advancing up the ravines; soon the light of Faith will flash through the gloom of the forest and illumine it as if it were a vast temple, "a many-pillared shrine of the Almighty." Before long the energetic enthusiasm of such apostles of colonization as Father Paradis will carve a way through the woods; lay low those gaunt columns, prepare the soil for the plough and the harrow; before long about those wilds the traveller can sing with Moore,

"I knew by the smoke that so gracefully curled  
 Above the tall chimney that a cottage was near;"

before long many a French, English, Scotch and Irish Canadian, whose steps might have led him down the path of emigration to the United States, or along that of migration to the far west, will set up his household gods on the shores of Timagami and there build up a heritage that will be a fort and a refuge for his children in years to come. Where to-day the smoke rises from the Indian's camp fire, in a very few years hundreds of columns shall pierce the sky above a thriving village or town, where to-day the mountain summit is marked by the lightning-blasted and weather-beaten ramparts, in a short time the traveller will pause to gaze upon:

"The great church that tops the neighbouring hill."

The last rays of a setting sun now gild the green heads of the young pine trees; in another decade their departing beams will kiss the cross upon the spire of some holy temple. It has been so elsewhere and in the past it shall be so here and in the near future. What a glorious work is that of colonization, when it is combined with civilization and Christianizing! For the present we will say no more upon this most inviting of subjects, but we purpose, for the sake of Faith, for the good of our country, for the benefit of our coreligionists and fellow-countrymen, to continue it in the future and to develop it as much as our limited powers will permit. Meanwhile, if there be a man in Canada with whose efforts we sympathize and in whose mission we have great confidence, he certainly is the colonization apostle of that new and glorious country around Timagami—the Rev. Father Paradis. May success attend his efforts and prosperity walk by his side; may the day soon dawn when he will be able to glance with triumph and pride upon a wilderness flourishing as a garden under the spell of his magic enthusiasm!