



EDITORIAL NOTES.

Thanks to the encouragement of our rapidly increasing number of readers, THE TRUE WITNESS is moving steadily along the highway of progress.

It now seems that the Detroit Board of Education overstepped the mark in its anxiety to exclude all Catholics from employment. The people of that city are demanding that the resolutions of that fanatical body be repealed. These anti-Catholic bigots seem to have more zeal than prudence. If they are allowed rope enough they will soon succeed in binding themselves fast.

The *Chambre de Commerce* held a meeting last week at which Mr. Morin, Sr., the president, brought up the question of a free library. It was fully discussed. Mr. Catellier said that his idea was to have the money, now spent on night schools expended on the free library for the city. Mr. Geoffrion thought differently. He believes that Montreal is rich enough to support both night schools and free library. A resolution was passed to the effect that *Chambre de Commerce* is of opinion that the City Council should establish a public library at once. Unnecessary to say that we agree entirely with Mr. Geoffrion. The city can well afford to establish a free library; and it is very much required. Were it only possible to have one, we would say let us have the night schools. It is very logical; what use is a library to those who have no schooling? But by all means let Montreal have both; the city can well afford the cost!

In Friday's *Star* there is a short but very misleading editorial under the heading "Martin Luther." It is a most plausible little piece of composition, in which the writer expresses the idea that it is of no benefit to our age to analyze the lives and motives of the great reformers of history—whether they be poets, statesmen or religious innovators. We disagree entirely with the *Star* on this point. These men, like Homer or Martin Luther are not dead: especially men of the category of religious reformers. They live in their works and in the ever present effects of the causes that they created. We must trace a stream to its source if we wish to know from what rock it springs; we must examine the history of institutions with the search light of present experiences. It might suit the admirers of Luther, his hero-worshippers to object to his hero-analysts. But if the life and motives of the man are beyond suspicion, consequently the source of Protestantism pure, there should be no objection to a most minute examination of them. St. Peter is dead, in the sense of mortal separation of body and soul; so is St. Paul: we hold them up as models for Christian imitation; with their lives and motives we confound the Atheists, the Bod Ingersoll's of this age. No one, not even the *Star*, would cry out against a full and minute analysis of their lives: the fuller and the more minute, the better

for Christianity. Not so with Luther, Calvin, Henry VIII, Elizabeth and other creed-builders of the Protestant kind. Like the orb from which it derives its name, the *Star's* twinkle is very uncertain, and it only shines in the night time; the rays Truth's daylight obscure it—it disappears from the firmament of logic.

We are going to relate a fact; let our readers draw whatever conclusions they may think proper. We do not pretend to decide upon the cause, nor the effect in the occurrence that we are about to record: we simply tell what took place. For special reasons we withhold names. In the village of Lacolle there lives a grocer, who recently came from Valleyfield. He is—or was in August last—an Atheist. He had sought to spread his anti-Christian and infidel ideas through Valleyfield; he carried on the same unholy work of Satan in the parish of Lacolle. One day, not long ago, a group of boys were collected in the store, and as usual the proprietor was inculcating his atheistical ideas into the young lads of the place. The discussion upon God and His existence ran high and waxed warm. Suddenly one young fellow, aged 19 years, a Catholic boy—son of a widow, who was absent from her home—gave expression to his disbelief in a Deity. Striking the counter he swore an oath, and said,—“I tell you there is no God!”—He struck the counter, but never raised his hand from it: he stiffened out, and the united strength of all his companions could not straighten his arm, nor bring vitality to his form. They rolled him, they rubbed him, they did all that men could do; but, in agony he cried and cried: “Mon Dieu! mon Dieu! un pretre! un pretre!” The priest was sent for: he came. The boy was carried home, his mother was informed of the sad event, she returned to witness her child's paralyzed condition. When the boy made his confession, and received Communion, the paralysis disappeared and he recovered all power of his limbs. Such are the facts: all the people of Lacolle and surrounding country know of them. The names of the parties are at the disposal of any one who should happen to be inquisitive about the case. As we said at the beginning, we draw no conclusions. Was it a visitation of God or was it a mere coincidence? We do not attempt to decide. We merely tell what occurred.

We feel that it is due to the *Daily Witness* not to allow one of its editorials of last week to go past unnoticed. Much talk was heard about the significance of the Hon. Mr. Gladstone's absence from the Lord Mayor's banquet. Some went so far as to hint, and even state, that the G. O. M. would make an excuse of his age and weakness to escape exposing his hand in the great political game, especially the Home Rule portion of it. It would be very difficult to place the situation in a fairer light than did the *Witness* in one of its issues of last week. Our contemporary said:—“Mr. Gladstone's critics want him to kill himself with un-

necessary attendance at public functions. We are sure no one was more grieved than himself at his forced absence from the laureate's funeral, and it goes without saying that he is the last premier in the world to be away from the Lord Mayor's banquet, where, according to long usage, premiers have annually disported themselves before the nation in announcing what they wished to announce of the Government's policy and concealing what they wished to conceal behind fireworks of rhetoric. At being able to speak without saying, Mr. Gladstone has a reputation quite equal to that of his rival. Indeed, his enemies accuse him as the same rival did of doing nothing else at the best of times. As he could certainly keep counsel as well as either of the colleagues who are to represent him at the banquet, the accusation that he is staying away because he does not wish to commit himself on the Irish question is not very cogent. As foreign affairs are by custom the leading features of the Lord Mayor's banquet speeches, Mr. Gladstone's absence will give his loved and trusted lieutenant, Lord Rosebery, a splendid chance to do himself credit and to win further the confidence of the nation.”

In connection with the recent rumors about the unsatisfactory results of the Harbor Improvements we heard a remark which had led us to point out a mistake in identity that might be easily made by people unacquainted with the Montreal officials and public men. A gentleman, on Saturday, referring to the proposed new bridge over the canal, at Wellington street, said that he supposed Kennedy would make as great a mess of that business and sink proportionately as much money in it as was done in the Montreal harbor. Without any other comment we will inform that gentleman, and any one else whom it may concern, that Mr. Kennedy the Chief Engineer of the Harbor Commissioners and Mr. Kennedy the contractor for the Wellington street bridge are very distinct and different people. The name is all that is the same. In nationality, creed, and politics they are as diametrically different as two men could possibly be. The Harbor Engineer is a Scotchman, a Protestant, and a Grit; the bridge contractor is an Irishman, a Catholic, and a Conservative. What one man might say, a hundred might repeat; when one person confounds the identities of two men, it is possible for a thousand to do the same. Therefore we thought proper to give our readers this piece of information.

We publish elsewhere a letter that is both timely and suggestive. The writer draws attention to a picture illustrating the first Mass said in presence of Columbus, when he landed in America, and as if we could not have a grand historical painting commemorative of the first Mass celebrated 250 years ago, in presence of De Maisonneuve upon the site of the present Custom House in Montreal. It is a fine idea and a patriotic one as well. It would be a

favorable opportunity for our young Canadian artists. We are not wanting in talent, and the brushes of our Canadian painters have already won fame for themselves and honors for the country. Here is a chance: will not our confreres of the press—especially the French press—take it up and help in the realization of this project? It would be a means of celebrating that great event in a worthy manner, while giving to Canada, perhaps, a masterpiece that would go down the ages as a sample of what a young country is capable of producing. Our art, as well as our literature, music and science, must be cultivated and encouraged.

On the first and second of November a strange ceremony took place in the little town of Wittenberg, in Germany, when the Emperor and his household attended the rededication of the little church, to the door of which Luther nailed his now famous thesis against indulgences. There is something strangely remarkable about the fact that the very day whereon the celebration took place should be that which is dedicated, by the Church, in a special manner, to the devotions on behalf of the souls in Purgatory. Imagine the commemoration of the greatest attack that was ever made upon indulgences and prayers for the dead, taking place upon the very day on which millions offer up their supplications for those poor sufferers in the prison-house of the souls. It seems like a wanton mockery. That quaint old German city is filled with relics of Luther, which are venerated by the very men who ridicule the honor we pay to the memory of saint and martyr. Upon the portico of the church is a golden plate, and thereon is engraven an image of Christ, with one of Luther and another of Melancthon on either side of the Divine figure. A traveller standing in front of it one day turned enthusiastically to a companion and asked him if he recognized the pictures. The other paused a moment and then seriously replied: “Yes. The centre one is Christ; but I don't know which of the others is the penitent thief, as they are both facing the Saviour.” It may be a little harsh; but there is material for the text of a goodly lecture in that remark.

We learn with pleasure that in Italy there exists a group of young Catholics who are banded together to uphold their faith, and members of which body are found in all the universities of the peninsula. These young men are not in the active field of politics, but they are preparing themselves for the coming contest that shall be a mighty struggle in the near future. By their example and words they seek to inculcate true Catholic principles and to educate their own generation. By means of clubs, associations, and above all the press they purpose breathing a nobler and truer spirit into the public life of that country. This is positively good news and should gladden the heart of the aged and venerable pontiff, who looks out from the windows of his palace-prison and sees, with prophetic eye, how “coming events cast their shadows before.”