

## THE TRUE WITNESS

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1898

## A CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL.

Of late we have been calling attention to the text books used in the High schools of Ontario, and we might also say in those of Quebec; it seems quite timely that we should say a word regarding a crying want in this city—in fact in this whole Province—in the absence of a Catholic High School for our English-speaking pupils. By what would seem a providential coincidence, at this very moment serious steps have been taken by the priests of St. Patrick's parish to provide our people with an institution similar, in many ways, to the High schools of which we have been writing. That there is a necessity for such a school no person will for a moment question; that some objections may be raised on the part of the less interested we very naturally expect. But the objections can be easily overcome, while the necessity will remain as long as our people have no High school of their own. Before coming to the consideration of the subject let us have a few facts.

At present, as was announced by Rev. Father Quinlivan, Parish Priest of St. Patrick's, on Sunday last, the ground has already been purchased. The site selected is beyond a doubt the most central and attractive in the city of Montreal—within a few hundred yards of St. Patrick's Church, at easy distance from all the principal parts of the city, and in a locality where quiet reigns almost as undisturbed as upon the mountain. The property purchased is at the corner of Ste. Genevieve and Palace (now Lagachetiere) Streets, and it runs back as far as Belmont Park. It has an area of 28,177 feet. On Belmont Avenue 122 feet, and on Palace (or Lagachetiere) Street 122 feet 8 inches; on Ste. Genevieve Street the frontage is 226 feet 8 inches, and the rear of the property is 235 feet. It cost \$38,605.50, in addition to which the city taxes paid by the purchasers, and the one and a half per cent demanded by the Provincial Government. We might ransack the city and not find a more suitable place for such an institution.

The next move to be made is to commence the erection of an edifice which shall have every modern improvement, and which from an architectural as well as from every other standpoint, shall be an ornament to the city. For over a year and a half THE TRUE WITNESS has been hammering away upon the question of schools and education. It has been our desire to see the rising generation provided with every facility in the line of a truly Catholic training. We found numberless faults in the actual state of educational affairs, and more particularly in regard to our English-speaking Catholic youth. On some

points we found the system—not only of instruction but also of administration—badly in need of amelioration. In fact to us there is something radically wrong in the whole system as applied in this city in particular. We have, from time to time, striven to point out the lacks which we noticed, and to do so in a manner that might serve to bring about the remedies rather than excite animosities. Amongst others we will mention one great blot upon our actual system. The money paid for school purposes, by the people of a district, should be expended upon that district and not on another one. Up to the present all the funds drawn from the pockets of the taxpayers have been spent just wherever and however a few privileged people saw fit. Palaces are built in certain sections while a log-hut is denied to others. Money is squandered in tearing down a beautiful gothic structure in one place, and the expense is doubled by replacing it with an architectural monstrosity. Hundreds upon hundreds are lavished upon one central academy, while not a cent—comparatively speaking—is given to an immense central district, the people of which contribute their large portion to the fund. We believe in the Ontario system of distribution of school funds, by which each district has the enjoyment of the money it contributes, and is not obliged to support other districts at the expense of its own interests.

St. Patrick's Parish has never received any adequate return for all that its people have paid to the school fund, and we rejoice, to-day, to learn that the people of that great central congregation are to have, what our Province never had, a really Catholic High School.

It is with a particular fervor that we advocate the encouragement of this grand undertaking, because we behold in it the expression of the cherished ideas which we have been striving in our humble way to express and to have realized. It is true, we have many admirable schools, but we will show in future articles that these schools are not what exactly suits the English speaking Catholics. They are most admirable in their own way and most praiseworthy in a multitude of respects, but they are not suitable for the proper training—that is education and instruction—of our children. It is not our doing if we are cast in a certain groove. It was not of our own will that we came into the world, nor did we control our accidents of birth. God, in His wisdom, ordained that we should be born here, not in China, nor Africa, nor Europe. He it is who gave us a distinct language and a particular nationality. These things we are bound to accept as the effects of His Providence and we must act in accordance. From the Protestant element we are cut off by the barrier of religion; and we are attempting, in our series of articles upon text-books, to show that the faith of our children is exposed to premature death by contact with the non-Catholic methods of sectarian schools; from our French fellow-citizens, in matters of education—apart from religion—we are cut off by the difference of language. Their system, their methods, their customs, their literature, their modes of inculcating principles and teaching all that is required in an educated man of the world, differ essentially from ours. No matter how perfectly they may teach yet they cannot give the English-speaking youth an English training; no more than the most competent English professor could give a perfect French training to a pupil. Between the two we have absolutely nothing whereon to stand, and it is this great blank that is to be filled in by the establishment in our

midst of a Catholic High School, such as the one proposed. Later on we will have more to say upon the subject; but for this week we will be satisfied with giving this general outline.

From another stand-point we consider this to be one of the very best moves that has ever been made on the educational chess-board of our Province. Ever since the death of the venerable and never-to-be-forgotten pastor of St. Patrick's—Rev. Father Dowd—it has been the desire of those whom he served so well and who loved him so dearly, to have a suitable monument erected to his memory. Had he, himself, a voice in the matter, we doubt if he could have asked for any more suitable memorial than that of a grand Catholic institution that would recall his name and his labors, and perpetuate the work which he had so nobly commenced and carried on with success and devotedness. In fact we would suggest that the institution be at once a center of Catholic education and a monument to the zeal and goodness of Rev. Father Dowd. We might add that not inappropriately should it be called, "the Dowd Memorial High School of Montreal."

It remains but to appeal to our Irish Catholic citizens to enter heart and soul into this grand undertaking. Times out of mind have we heard it remarked that the Protestant people of means are wonderfully generous to their public institutions, especially their schools, colleges and universities, while our Catholics seem backward in the extreme. We have always made reply that our Catholics are not as wealthy as our Protestant friends and that no fitting opportunity has as yet presented itself for the exercise of their benevolence and their encouragement of education. Here, then, is a splendid occasion for them to show that they are not behind, in proportion to their means, their fellow-citizens of other creeds. We trust sincerely that this project will soon be carried to a successful accomplishment, and that the memory of the good priest, the friend of Catholic and Protestant alike, will awaken a responsive echo in every generous heart, and that we may soon see the wall and spires of the "Dowd Memorial High School" ornamenting the center of our city and behold the wonderful lights of true and elevated education that the institution will shed upon the rising generation.

## OBLIGATIONS.

The most important title in the Civil Code is that of "Obligations." It is the pivot around which all the others revolve; it is the focus to which all the articles of the civil law converge and from it again they all radiate. As it is in the Civil Law so is it, and even with greater reason, in the case of that wonderful organization called the Church. Established by a Divine Founder and governed by Laws that are as immutable as Truth itself, one of the most prominent characteristics of the Catholic Church is found in the "obligations" imposed upon the faithful by that Law. Authority is of the very essence of social existence, and no society can last that is not subject to legitimate authority. "Order is Heaven's first law;" and there is order in all the immense universe of God, beginning with the Creator—the fountain head of authority—and ending with the last and most insignificant object of His creation. Where there is order there must be authority; where authority exists, and an established law supports that authority, there are of necessity obligations imposed by that authority and to be fulfilled by all who are faithful to that established law. In

this do we perceive at once the difference between the Catholic Church and the non-Catholic denominations.

In order to illustrate our meaning, so that it may be more easily grasped by every one, we will select one from many of the obligations that the law of the Church, and the law of God consequently, imposes upon the faithful. God, Himself, in accordance with His Infinite Majesty and His authority over His creatures, demands from the human race the tribute of adoration. He has commanded that man should pray to Him, should bend the knee before Him, should acknowledge by outward acts His Supreme and Almighty right to receive the adoration of His creature. The Catholic Church, being founded by the Son of God, and being perpetually sanctified and illumined by the Holy Spirit, is bound to teach the law and to uphold the authority of God. Therefore, faithful to her Divine mission, she not only exhorts the faithful, instructs them in their duties, teaches them what is the will of God, but she commands them, under pain of sin, to adore, to pay that tribute to God which He demands and which is His right. In imposing that obligation of prayer upon her children the Church is merely carrying out to the very letter the law of the Most High, and doing, in the name of God, that which God wills should be done.

We will take, for instance, the obligation of hearing Mass on Sunday. There is no escape from that duty. Of course there are many reasonable and legitimate excuses; physical impossibility of attending either on account of illness or the circumstances of locality, and many others which are readily understood. But when no such reasons exist, there is no exception to the rule. The obligation of attending Mass on Sunday is strict and the violation of it is a mortal sin. Every Catholic is aware of this obligation; the child learns it at the mother's knee; it is taught in the penny Catechism; it is preached from the pulpit. When Sunday comes, when the great day of rest dawns, all other consideration must be laid aside, and the first thing that the Catholic is bound to provide for, is the time to go to the Church and adore God. He may take physical and mental rest during the remainder of the day; he may enjoy innocent recreation that is calculated to recuperate his strength for the labor of the coming week; but he dare not violate that one and emphatic obligation of hearing Mass. The consequence is that from early dawn until noon our numerous Churches are filled with the faithful, who go to offer up the tribute of adoration to the Creator upon the day appointed by the Almighty for worship and rest. In virtue of that authority, which is the sign of her Divine origin, the Church imposes that obligation—amongst many others—and the violation of that obligation is tantamount to a denial of God's right to exact the tribute that He imposes upon His creatures.

Here we are met with the very illogical but apparently rational objection, that each one is aware that God has commanded him to pray and adore, and each individual is the proper judge of the form, the time, and the duration of that prayer. Acting upon this violation of that strict obligation—or rather ignoring the existence of such obligation—our non-Catholic friends are not under a command to attend in the temple every Sunday. They may be invited, coaxed, enticed, persuaded, or drawn to the church for one reason or another; but they are not told that their absence is a sin and a mortal offence against the majesty of God. No minister dare so speak to his congrega-