

ESTABLISHED, 1852.

The Casket

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY AT ANTIGONISH, BY THE CASKET PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY (LIMITED), M. DONOVAN, Manager.

Terms: \$1.00 per Year in Advance.

Shall we sharpen and refine the youthful intellect, and then leave it to exercise its new powers upon the most sacred of subjects, as it will, and with the chance of exercising them wrongly; or shall we proceed to feed it with divine truth, as it gains an appetite for knowledge? - CARDINAL NEWMAN.

THURSDAY, MAY 5.

The majority of the Halifax City Council, chagrined because the Legislature amended the Cemetery Bill so as to do justice to the Catholics of the city, requested and obtained its withdrawal. They would rather do without the cemetery than treat the Catholics of the city fairly.

Seldom has a Canadian April been so spring-like as it has been this year. Although the temperature never high during the month, owing to the presence of large fields of ice off the north-eastern and south-eastern coasts, yet we have often seen the month of May far more unfavorable both for agriculture and for navigation than last April has been. There seems to be no doubt that a change is coming over our climate. It may not be easy to account for it, but the fact is patent to everybody that the winters are now far less severe than they formerly were. And what is very strange, the climate of Europe is becoming colder according as ours grow milder. Had we exchanged winters with England, we should have had the worse of the bargain this year. Even as late as the 18th of April a fierce storm of snow and sleet swept over the British Isles and the north of France, breaking down telegraph lines, and doing immense damage to budding fruit trees and the early crops. We Canadians are prone to complain, but the fact remains that Providence is wonderfully kind to us.

The frenzy of Paris anarchists continues to find vent in acts of violence. The civil authorities have their hands full in dealing with these desperate men. At the recent trials of anarchists in Paris, it was difficult to get men to serve on the jury, or magistrates to preside. They feared for their lives, and not without reason. A man named Vey, the keeper of a restaurant, had delivered the anarchist Rovachol, who was condemned the other day to imprisonment for life, into the hands of the police. Not many days after the restaurant was blown to pieces by a bomb explosion. Very was mortally wounded, and some other persons seriously injured. Violent manifestoes are also being issued by anarchists. They proclaim that "by Anarchism without God or master all may fully produce according to their strength, while simply consuming according to their wants." Without God or master! What significant words these are to the infidel Government of France which has for years been doing its utmost to rob Frenchmen of their very belief in God, the Author of law and order! Only a few weeks ago it bluntly refused to afford police protection to Catholic churches in Paris and elsewhere in which the enemies of religion and order had caused unseemly disturbances. The Government which so contemptuously disregards the rights of God and His Church is but a step removed from anarchy. If the State shows by repeated acts its contempt of God and religion, what wonder that depraved citizens should seek to throw off the yoke of obedience to God and man? For truly without God there can be no master.

In its issue of April the 25th the N. Y. Sun publishes the last of a series of articles on the choice of the next Pope, contributed by a Roman correspondent who writes under an assumed name. The articles are cleverly written, and serve to give an insight into the intrigues of certain interested politicians to influence the next Papal election; but they throw very little light on the main subject with which they profess to deal. The writer is too worldly-wise to recognize the controlling action of Providence as the decisive factor in the problem he has set himself to solve. He discusses the chances of this and that Cardinal, and gauges the probabilities for or against his election to the Papal throne by his popularity and the strength of his following in the Sacred College, just as he would discuss the chances of the rival candidates for the Presidency of the United States. The Catholic who reads his articles will set more store on what he says of the moral prestige of the Popes than on all his learned but perfectly fruitless speculations as to the probable successor of Leo XIII. Here is the closing paragraph of his last article:

"Eminently progressive in its historic march and its exterior organization, the Papacy is the power above all others which has the most marvellous energy of transformation and of adaptation to the metamorphoses of society. If it is faithful to this new mission, it will have a place of the first order in the play and the struggle of the influences that will share the future of humanity. The Papacy has been eternally a moral resource in times of crises and convulsions of Europe and of the world. It will henceforth be the great pacifying and amphyctonic tribunal. International in its very nature, it belongs to the entire world."

The poet-laureate of Italian Freemasonry, Giuseppe Carducci, was promoted on the 2nd of April to the 33rd degree—the highest round of the masonic ladder. The Grand-Orient of Rome signalled the event by festivities of unusual joyousness. The Italian brethren of the mystic tie appear to be very proud of their poet, and no wonder. He enjoys the distinction of being probably the first sane man who has sung the praises of the Evil One. It is eminently fitting that a society which, on the continent of Europe at all events, aims by every foul means within its reach at wiping Christianity and all belief in God out of existence, should shower its honors, such as they are, upon an impious wretch who had the monstrous courage to drag his muse into the lowest depths of blasphemy. Here is a literal translation of a verse of Carducci's "Hymn" to Satan:

"Behold him as he passes, ye people. Behold Satan the great. Behold him on his chariot of flame. Hosanna, O Satan! Hosanna, great Rebel. Thou hast conquered the favour of the priests."

What an ungouly set the members of the Italian lodges must be who not only segregate among them, but even crown with highest honors, the loathsome miscreant who could pen such hideous lines! And those, mark well, are the men who rule Italy and Rome to-day. And yet there are to be found people—intelligent enough otherwise—who wonder why the Pope cannot be content with his present condition! And the same people wonder too why the Catholic Church is opposed to Freemasonry. She is opposed to it simply because she is, and must ever be, opposed to all the devil's works and pomps. It is true that the Freemasonry which exists in English-speaking lands is a comparatively mild type of this social plague, but it is the same disease nevertheless. It is consoling to observe that Protestant ministers are gradually opening their eyes to the real aim and trend of this and all kindred fraternities.

We used to amuse ourselves of late years by poking fun at the so-called American Navy, but it is the Yankees' turn to have their laugh now. At the heels of General Herbert's unfavorable report of the condition of the Canadian militia comes the unexpected news that the English Home Troops have been weighed in the balance by their own superior officers, and found sadly wanting. The Dukes of Cambridge and of Connaught, Lord Wolsley and Sir Evelyn Wood were recently examined before a committee of enquiry and all concurred in the startling opinion that in the event of an invasion, the Home troops would simply be food for foreign powder. Half the men are unfit for service, being either too young or lacking stamina. Lord Wolsley gave the forces the unkindest of all by likening them to a "squeezed lemon." What a contrast between the English army and the superbly-trained legions of Germany and of France! It is well that the continental powers have a wholesome fear of England's wooden, or rather iron walls.

Four reasons can be given for the deterioration of the Home Forces. In the first place, the pay is so small that able-bodied men no longer enlist, unless compelled by sheer necessity to do so. Secondly, the Queen's uniform has somehow lost its charm for the eyes of civilians, and even an officer's epaulettes are no longer a passport to good society in England. Thirdly, the rank and file are worked like slaves. Henry Labouchere relates in his paper—London Truth—a recent incident which well illustrates the excessive drudgery imposed upon England's soldiers; for it is not likely that the land forces are treated more tenderly than the marines. At Portsmouth the other day, as a detachment of marines on some kind of fatigue duty, were passing a gang of convicts at work, one of the latter was heard to exclaim: "Look at these poor devils. We are better off than they are, anyhow." A fourth reason for the inferiority of the Home troops is to be found in the fact that the best men are usually picked out for foreign and colonial service. Loyal Britishers can find a grain of consolation in the reflection that if England has no soldiers at home worth boasting of, she has at least a few first-class regiments abroad. But their chief source of consolation must be the absence of war-clouds above the European horizon.

Times are reported to be uncommonly dull across the United States border this spring. In the cities on the Atlantic seaboard are large numbers of people who seek employment and cannot find it. In Chicago and the cities of the Pacific coast, the same state of affairs appears to prevail. Among those who are idle are a great many young people from this province who have not found Uncle Sam one-half so accommodating as they expected he would be. Many of those who have obtained situations have been obliged to content themselves with low wages. It is likely however that business will brighten up by and by. At the same time it would perhaps be, on the whole, beneficial to this country that the dull times should continue to prevail across the line. It would at least serve to cure our young men and women of the mania for going to the States that possesses nearly all of them. Until that mania ceases, our population will remain at a standstill, and farming—the mainstay of the country—will keep going backward. While the bone and sinew of the country are in the service of the stranger, we need not expect any great degree of prosperity at home.

We must not however grow pessimistic

about these things. People must learn to submit to the inevitable. Everywhere now-a-days the largeness of the growing fast in population at the expense of the country districts and the small towns. Our exodus is certainly deplorable enough in many respects, but it would not exist at all if many of those who go away did not better their prospects thereby. It is the success of some that lures others away. For the rest, our exodus, had as it is, is thrown in the shade by the rate of depopulation of some tracts of country in the neighboring Republic itself. Read, for instance, what the Detroit Free Press has to say of some parts of Kansas:

"There are twenty well-built towns in Kansas without a single inhabitant to waken the echoes of their deserted streets. Saratoga has a \$50,000 opera house, a large brick hotel, a \$20,000 schoolhouse and a number of fine business houses, yet there is nobody even to claim a place to sleep. At Fargo, a \$20,000 school-house stands on the side of a hill, a monument to the bond-selling craze. A herder and his family constitute the sole population of what was once an incorporated city. . . . Those Kansas towns, like Wichita, advertised themselves as 'phenomenal boom cities. For while 'everything was lovely and the goose hung high,' but at last dry rot took hold on the boom towns and killed them."

A sad picture, truly. By the way, what has become of the "Terminal City" scheme? Let us hope that none of the Kansas "dry rot" has taken hold of it too.

THAT TAX EXEMPTION BILL.

It is gratifying to learn that the movement set on foot in Halifax for the taxing of churches and charitable institutions has received its quietus for another year at least. The Bill brought in by the City Council, to which reference was already made in these columns, was discussed by the Assembly, in committee of the whole, on Wednesday last week. A motion by Mr. Fielding that the act should go into force only after being submitted to a plebiscite of the civic voters of Halifax, was adopted. A further motion to the effect that the act should become law only when made applicable to the whole Province, was defeated by three votes. It was finally moved that the Bill pass as amended, and the vote taken on this motion stood 13 to 13. Speaker Power gave his casting vote against the motion. A final effort was made on Thursday to advance the Bill to a third reading, but the motion was rejected by a vote of 13 to 10. This is the fourth time that Parliament has refused to sanction the taxation of churches and charities. It is more than likely, however, that the matter will come before the House next year again, as the promoters of the Bill will be encouraged by the strong support they received this year to continue the agitation. It is regrettable that so many of our local representatives should be found willing to lend their support to a measure which would benefit those who give little or nothing to religious and charitable institutions at the expense of those who have loftier conceptions of their duty to God and their fellow-man. If men have a right to worship God and help their fellow-creatures in distress—and it is not only their right but their solemn duty to do so—they have likewise a right to devote their money to building churches and charitable institutions. And if the buildings so erected neither are, nor can be turned into, a source of revenue to those who have an interest in them—and they neither are nor can be so long as they serve their purpose,—on what principle of equity is a tax to be levied upon them? In discussing the basis of taxation the most approved writers on political economy, such as Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, and Professor Fawcett, lay it down as a principle that citizens should be taxed in proportion to their respective abilities to contribute to the support of the State. But it is abundantly evident that a citizen's interest in a church or charitable institution is no part of his ability to pay his civic taxes. It is true that the municipality extends police and fire protection, as well to churches and private asylums as to buildings that are taxed. But the cost to the municipality of the protection so extended is really insignificant. It is not a fraction of what the community would have to expend if the pulpit should cease to inculcate the practice of those virtues which distinguish the God-fearing, law-abiding citizen from the burglar and the assassin, and if the inmates of institutions supported by private charity were to become dependent upon the charity of the public. The spendthrift may squander his substance in riotous living, and the owner of real estate convert his property into cash and thus free himself in part or entirely from the burden of taxation. Is there a tax levied on either of these for the money squandered or stored away? No. And why? Because each of them has a perfect right to dispose of his property as he pleases, so far as the State is concerned; and in one case the money wasteful lessens the ability of the spendthrift to pay a tax; in the other, the money stored away in the purse or private safe is beyond the reach of the tax-assessor. But let a citizen, who already bears his full share of civic taxation, devote a portion of his income to the support of a church or charity from which he can derive no pecuniary profit, and at once a cry is raised, an agitation is set up, and Parliament is petitioned to sanction the levying of an additional tax upon that citizen for having honored his God and lightened the distress of his fellow-man with the money he could have hoarded up like the miser or squandered like the spendthrift. They tell us that the progressive spirit of the age demands the sweeping away of those

tax exemptions. By all means let this progressive spirit maintain its onward march, but in the right direction. The taxing of churches and charities would be a long step on the way back to paganism and barbarism.

MEXICAN MISSIONS.

In the course of some remarks on the Presbyterian missions in Mexico the Witness says in its last issue:

"The priesthood opposed Bible circulation, and stirred up against the colporteurs the wrath of the ignorant people." Of course the Catholic priesthood of Mexico opposed the circulation of the Protestant version of the Bible. They would have been false to their trust had they not done so. They opposed also the efforts of these itinerant Bible vendors to delude simple people into believing that faith and salvation come through the reading of Scripture and the "freest exercise of reason" in determining its sense. Bible Christianity does not appear to commingle itself much to the Mexican mind. The net results of Presbyterian labour in Mexico during many years, of the large sums of money spent and cart-loads of Bibles circulated, are 5,223 communicants, who, of course, are not all converts. The Witness publishes a short account of the "conversion" to Presbyterianism of the Rev. Arcadio Morales, as given by himself. The man was a gold-thread spinner by trade before he was called to be a preacher. The process by which he changed his former faith and calling, and developed into a Presbyterian clergyman was very simple and very natural. First of all he bought a Protestant Bible, both "beautiful and cheap." He then read the Bible and read it again and again, until at last he tells us: "I understood what idolatry was." Having got thus far, he ventured to attend service in a Protestant place of worship. "I trembled," he writes, "as I drew near the house of God." Once he had crossed the threshold, this mysterious trembling ceased; he heard the New Testament read, and for the first time understood that for quite a while he had been a Protestant. "From that moment," he concludes, "I was a Christian, and eight days after my first attendance upon an evangelical service I began to preach." Were Mr. Morales a fair specimen of Mexicans as a body—which he is not—we should be forced to agree with our esteemed contemporary that they are an "ignorant people." By reading the New Testament, we are told, he understood what idolatry was. It is doubtful whether he has any clear idea of it yet, for the Testament itself is by no means clear on the point, though the Catholic catechism is, which he should have studied to better purpose. "From that moment I was a Christian." Whatarrant nonsense! He might have learned from his New Testament that men are made Christians by baptism, and not by attending a Protestant service and hearing the Bible read. His ignorance of what constitutes a Christian no doubt gave rise to the curious conceit, implied in his words, that, namely, Catholics are not Christians at all. And this man, who neither knew his catechism nor understood the elementary truths of the New Testament, was made a minister of the Gospel, within the surprisingly short space of eight days of his having become a Christian! St. Paul would require a longer and riper preparation in those who undertake the ministry of the Word. For in his epistle to Titus he strongly insists upon knowledge as being one of the essential qualifications for that office—"that he may be able to exhort in sound doctrine." (i. 9). And writing to Timothy, he cautions him expressly not to admit into the ministry a "neophyte" or newly converted Christian, "lest," he adds significantly, "being puffed up with pride, he fall into the judgment of the devil" (iii. 6). It is true that St. Paul himself began to preach very shortly after his conversion. But then St. Paul was an Apostle and had seen the Lord; and he wished others to follow in this matter, not his example but his written direction.

[We give this week another version of the famous words of Burns. The writer submits it merely as a sample of the way in which different minds approach the performance of such work. He uses Pharo in Gaelic as the very embodiment of tyranny.]

Brosnachadh Bhruce Do Na h-Albannaich aig Allt a Bhonnach.

'Scottish thug he Wallace buaidh. Stric fo Bhruce bli'n cogadh cruaidh; Falte dhubh gu fha na h-uaidh. No gu buaidh is sith.

So an latha, n'air so tha, Feuch fo'n cruaidh a nuas mar sgall, Feuch na h-uaidh fo Ionhar dan, 'Dheanamh thraillean dinn.

Co na shligheair fealla fuar? Co na gheallair dh' iarradh uaidh? Co na thraill fo 's' all luchd-faath? Clis hi bhann! fhuir-chil.

Co, as leth a Thir 's Coir, 'Thairneas stallins chruaidh no thorn? Buaidh an arid, n' bas le glair, 'M' had n' coin 'san str.

Air ar bruid fo shluagh neo-chaomh, Air bhr n' al an'nes 'san daors', Traighill sinn ar' full 'san raon, 'Bheir sinn saors' d'ar linn.

Sios na coimhich dhorb gu bas, Tuillid Pharo a'as gach namh, Saorsa thig an loz gach strait! Buaidh ro bas ma'n till.

Mrs. L. E. Snow, Matron Infants' Home, Halifax, writes: "Putter's Emulsion has proved valuable in all cases of pulmonary Complaints, for building up the system of our little ones. They often ask for it."

The Early Spring tries Weak Lungs, which should then be fortified by a liberal use of Putter's Emulsion—only 50 cents a bottle, at all Druggists.

North Sydney Items.

The Grandguw ferry boat "Lennox" is here, and will be repaired on the Marine Railway.

The steam tug "Gladiator," owned by Mr. David Rutherford, has been repaired and somewhat enlarged, and has taken a new boiler, which was built for her in New Glasgow.

We have had three cargoes of produce in from P. E. Island, which seemed to sell very well. The Captain of one of these vessels figured in the police court for misbehavior on the street.

There have been several American fishermen in port. The American schooner "Frelonia" sailed up the harbor a few days ago with the stars and stripes at half mast, having lost one of her crew overboard.

The town has been overrun by commercial agents of all ages, shapes and sizes, selling everything from a car of flour to an overcoat or a box of clay pipes. "Men may come and men may go," but the drummer will bore you till the end of time.

Rev. Father McIntosh left on Monday morning for Halifax, calling at Antigonish. On Tuesday evening he represented Branch 131, C. M. B. A., of this town, at the initiation of Archbishop O'Brien into Branch 132, Halifax.

The spring's business seems to have opened here now, but the coasting trade is very dull, owing to the scarcity of freights. On account of the mild winter, coal dealers at Halifax and other points seem to have a good deal of coal on hand.

Another reason for the dullness of the Schooner trade is the work done by Cunard's barges. The tug "Dorca," which was on the same route last year, has already towed two large barges from the harbor loaded for Halifax.

An interesting sailing-boat race was run on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday last by the sloop "Jennie," owned by Mr. McGillivray of Sydney, and a schooner-rigged boat owned by Mr. Shea of Ingonish. The course was from Sydney to North Sydney and return, the distance being about ten miles. On Wednesday the latter craft won the race. On the following day victory rested with the "Jennie," the wind being lighter and the water smoother. On the last day the excitement was considerable, and a large crowd lined the wharves here, as the two boats rounded the Marine Railway block, the Ingonisher about a minute ahead. There was quite a little sea in the harbour, and a strong southwest wind was blowing. Once more Sydney's pet craft was doomed to defeat. The stranger arrived in Sydney nine minutes ahead.

Do you know that K. D. C. will relieve and cure your indigestion more quickly and effectually than any other remedy on the market. Try K. D. C.

Yesterday's Halifax Herald, received just as we go to press, contains a letter from St. John's, Nfld., which says: "Intelligence has been received from Rome that the Very Rev. Dr. Howley, vicar-apostolic of the west coast of Newfoundland, has been elevated to the episcopacy." This is gratifying news indeed. We congratulate the Very Rev. Doctor and the Catholics of West Newfoundland on this recognition of the indefatigable labors of their Vicar-Apostolic for their spiritual and temporal welfare. Ad multos annos.

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