

The True Witness

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MONTREAL, FRIDAY, Dec. 15, 1876.

ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

DECEMBER, 1876.

Friday, 15—Fast. Octave of the Immaculate Conception.

Saturday, 16—St. Eusebius, Bishop and Martyr.

Sunday, 17—THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Monday, 18—Expectation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Tuesday, 19—Of the Feria.

Wednesday, 20—Ember day. Fast.

Thursday, 21—St. THOMAS, APOSTLE.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The British Parliament meet for despatch of urgent and important business on the 8th of February next.

A despatch to Reuter's, from Paris, says it is stated that the present Cabinet will be maintained in its entirety, excepting that Jules Simon will replace M. de Marcere as Minister of the Interior. It is said that President MacMahon has approved of this combination.

At the annual fete of St. George, celebrated on Friday at St. Petersburg, the Czar, as usual, proposed the health of the Emperor William, who is the oldest knight of the Order, in complimentary and friendly terms. He also expressed hopes of the peaceable settlement of the Eastern question.

News has just been received from the interior of Mexico that President Lerdo and his Cabinet have been captured near the City of Mexico. Gen. Escabedo, Secretary of War, with several others, was shot. The Government of Lerdo is undoubtedly overthrown. Monterey and Saltillo have declared in favor of Iglesias, and surrendered without fighting.

At a meeting of the Glasgow (Scotland) County Justices on Friday, attention was called to the late appalling catastrophe at the Brooklyn Theatre in Brooklyn. It was agreed that steps should be taken to provide ample means of exit from the Glasgow theatres and also protection against fire. A committee of Justices and architects was appointed to inspect the different theatres and report to a future meeting.

A New York Herald despatch says Dr. Schlicmann has announced to the King of Greece the result of his explorations on the site of ancient Troy as follows:—"With unbounded joy I announce to your Majesty that I have discovered the monuments with the tradition related by Pausanias, indicated as the tombs of Agamemnon, Cassandra, Eurymedon and their companions who were killed while feasting at a banquet by Olympestra and her lover, Agasthus.

A resolution was offered on Friday in the House of Representatives at Washington asking for the appointment of a joint Committee of both Houses to obtain from the Supreme Court an opinion as to the jurisdiction of the House in counting the electoral vote, and as to other questions involved therein. In the Senate the joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution in regard to the count of the electoral vote was taken up, but after going into executive session the Senate adjourned.

There is little Eastern news of importance up to the time of going to press. It is stated that Gen. Ignatieff has received large discretionary powers as Russia's representative at the Conference in order to prevent the difficulties and delays that would arise were he compelled to refer questions backward and forward to the Czar. Turkey will propose to the Conference that the reforms be guaranteed by a mixed Commission, and it is generally thought at Constantinople that the result of the deliberations and of the concessions made on both sides will be the maintenance of peace.

All quiet, is the report from South Carolina, both parties appearing to be waiting for the action of the Congressional Committee, who have commenced operations by putting a number of clerks to work to obtain a copy of the election returns as sworn to by the managers of precincts. The Democrats, however, are making things generally unpleasant for their opponents. Not only has the House instructed the Judiciary Committee to proceed against Chamberlain for reasonable action in usurping the State Government, at the same time issuing instructions to it to ascertain what counties are not represented in the House, but it has stolen a march on the Republicans by obtaining an injunction against the banks which are the repositories of the State funds inhibiting them from paying monies to the order of Chamberlain's Treasurer, thereby, if the injunction prove successful, depriving the Republican Government of the sinews of war and threatening its very existence.

It is estimated that there are at present upwards of 45,000 workmen out of employment in the city of New York.

From late telegrams received we learn that all M. Dufaure's efforts to reorganize the French Cabinet having proved ineffectual, it is announced that he has definitely resigned.

The authorities of the Basque Province have refused to levy a war tax of 18,500,000 reals for the army occupation, ordered by General Quesada.

A special to the London Standard from Alexandria

announces that the envoys from the King of Abyssinia, who had been kept under surveillance in Cairo for some time, recently managed to escape to the house of the British Consul. They were arrested during the night by order of the Khedive. The continuation of the war with Abyssinia is now certain.

The Democrats elected to the Louisiana Legislature intend to imitate the action of their South Carolina colleagues and to ignore the action of the State Returning Board by meeting and organizing for business. Gen. Nicholls will be inaugurated as Governor, and affairs will be left *in statu quo* until the Presidential inauguration day, when it is expected that Tilden will take his seat, and that by his aid and that of the Democratic Congress their recognition will be secured. In view of this programme the Republicans will concentrate their efforts to win over a sufficient number of Democratic members to prevent the assembling of a quorum of the Democratic House.

THE "GLOBE" ON THE TAXATION OF ECCLESIASTICAL PROPERTY.

The *Globe*, true to its "liberal" instincts, has been advocating with considerable warmth the taxing of ecclesiastical property. This is only natural. The Presbyterian Scotchman, who will not buy an organ for the due celebration of divine worship, and whose Kirk is, in consequence of his niggardly spirit, more like a barn than a house of God, is sure to be anxious to make other religionists of more liberal ideas and more fervent piety, pay those taxes in which he is so unwilling to share. To men of less contracted mind, however, it must appear nothing short of a direct robbery of God to impose these taxes. For how does the matter stand?—Taking it for granted that each of the various religious bodies (always excepting the Presbyterian) is doing its best and exerting itself to the utmost to render glorious the house of God, if these taxes are imposed, it stands to reason that each congregation will either have to exert itself as much past its strength as the amount of taxes imposed, or will have to curtail from the house of God and its due solemnity just so much expenditure as will equal the taxes. In the one case an injustice is done to the congregation, in the other to Almighty God.—Not indeed that this consideration will have any force with our Scotch journalist. As a devout Presbyterian he has been so accustomed in his prayers to order God about, that no wonder he now wants Him to pay the taxes. Besides, Sandy has a keen eye to business, even in his devotions, and will only hug his own parsimonious church the more fondly when he finds that it saves him and throws the burden of taxation upon his neighbor.

But throwing all these considerations aside, let us look at it in a purely financial point of view. Where will be the gain of this mode of taxation? Will the individual tax-payer in the aggregate be benefited? Not one cent. The mode of taxation will be different, but the payer of the taxes will not be changed. Let us suppose a case. Jones at present pays one hundred dollars taxes. This is levied on his individual property, no ecclesiastical property being taxed. But let us suppose Jones to be a devout Anglican, and that, as proposed, the particular Anglican church which he attends is taxed a certain sum, which "certain sum," going into the city treasury, reduces Jones' taxation to eighty dollars. Here Jones has apparently been benefited twenty dollars. But has he been really benefited? If Jones is a member of no religious body—yes; because then he has no church to support, and he will have no further taxation. But the supposition is, that he is a member, and a consistent and honorable one, and therefore one paying his share of the maintenance of his church and pastor. Who then pays the church taxation? Jones does, or at least his share of it. Jones then is not benefited by this apparent reduction in his taxes, since if his taxes come not in one shape, they do in another. Of course Jones the non-religionist is benefited; and here the religious question again comes in. Jones the non-religionist is benefited—Jones the cheap religionist is benefited; but Jones the honorable and consistent religionist—the religionist loving his religion and caring for the beauty of God's house—is not benefited.

It is to be feared that there is more religious animosity in this tax question than sound statesmanship. The Catholic Church throughout the world will be the greatest sufferer by this taxation, hence the secret of this "liberal" crusade in favor of ecclesiastical property taxation. The men who originated it are men of no religion—free-thinkers, and haters of the Catholic Church. If they appear to favor Protestantism, it is indeed not for any love of it as a religion, but because they see in it, or fancy they see in it, a fulcrum for the overturning of Catholicity. The Catholic Church has undoubtedly more money invested in magnificent churches than any religious body under the sun.—Our free-thinkers and our religionists "of convenience" see this, hence their advocacy.

It would be folly of course to point out to these people the atheistical side of this question. Tax ecclesiastical property, and by degrees the most magnificent structures of the land will have to be left to fall into ruins; and architecture, sculpture, painting, and music will die out of the world.—Fancy St. Peter's at Rome assessed for taxes!

A REAL TRAGEDY.

We are called upon this week to chronicle one of the most appalling catastrophes that has ever occurred on this Continent. A few evenings ago whilst a large audience was attending a dramatic representation in one of the principal Theatres in Brooklyn, N.Y., the alarm of fire was suddenly given. The audience at first were about to rush precipitately from the building, but were, to some extent, controlled by the coolness and advice of some persons on the stage, who assured them, that there was no real danger. This was but momentary, however, for the flames having come in contact with the flimsy draping of the ceiling, in a moment the whole properties of the stage, were in one sheet of fire, and the panic stricken spectators made a *sauve qui peut* rush to the doors, which were entirely inadequate

for the purpose of allowing them to pass, and up to the time of writing these lines the number of victims who perished in the flames, or were crushed to death exceeds three hundred and seventy, with the wretched prospect of a still greater number being added to the lists. No pen can describe the horrors of this frightful calamity; the telegraphic despatches giving full particulars of the positions of several of the victims, scarcely one of whom can be identified by their relations and friends, are too sickening to contemplate. No wonder that the city of Brooklyn should be in a state of gloom, and that a wail should go up from many a heretofore happy hearth. Now that this great calamity has taken place, the unfortunate city which is the scene of the catastrophe should not be the only one to profit by the lesson which it has taught. The fact is evident, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that if proper precaution had been taken to have easy and convenient mode of egress from the building in question, there need have been no loss of life. We shall not moralize on this occasion about the place where the accident occurred; a similar horror might occur in many Churches where, if a fire were to break out, the wise precautions that experience teaches have not been adopted to secure the safety of the people. Not only in the event of fire but on the occasion of any of the thousand and one alarms which create panics are we threatened with visitations such as the people of Brooklyn mourn over to-day. Some of our contemporaries allege that our public Halls are not all that could be desired in this respect. We know there is a by-law of the Corporation of this city making wise regulations on this score, let us hope that our authorities will see that they are faithfully adhered to. But what we desire most to do is to draw the attention of our country readers to this calamity. No doubt many of the Churches in country places have doors opening inwards, and are so constructed generally as to become tombs for the living, in the event of any accident occurring, or alarm being given during Divine Service. We hope the frightful warning that comes from our neighbors may not be forgotten, but that the lesson it inculcates in so terrible a form may be acted upon at once by those whose duty it is to see that churches and public places of resort may be so arranged as to prevent the possibility of any such horror taking place amongst our people.

THE FINANCIAL AND STATISTICAL REPORT

OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS OF MONTREAL FOR THE SCHOLASTIC YEAR 1875-1876.

We have now to examine the school system followed in the establishments under the control of the Board of Roman Catholic Commissioners.

The requisite conditions of a good school are:—perfect suitability of the premises to the objects approved methods of tuition, and devoted teachers. It is useless for us to dwell on the suitability of the school buildings of the Roman Catholic Commissioners to their purpose. Nothing, that experience has shown to be useful, nothing, that a keen scrutiny of improvement may have suggested, has been neglected; they are, in their completeness, among the best appointed schoolhouses in the country.

The best methods of tuition must be those leading most directly to the education of the child. Education is developing, in due order and proportion, the faculties by which the child can best discharge his duties to God and attain the highest excellence as a man. To educate is to draw out and strengthen the powers and give them right direction. It is, therefore, something more than merely imparting knowledge. Knowledge is to the child's mind what food is to the body, so by acquiring and using knowledge of various kinds, the various faculties of the mind attain their full power and proportion. What ponderation is required in this successive development of the faculties! The memory may be inordinately developed at the expense of the reasoning power; the reason at the expense of the imagination; the feelings at the expense of the judgment; the mind at the expense of the body. The best methods of tuition will be those in which the faculties are developed not only in due order but in due proportion. These methods of tuition are not the work of a day but the work of centuries. Many learned men have devoted their life to this single purpose of making the road smooth to the child in his pursuit of knowledge. The Catholic Church has done, in that direction, the larger work, and the history of Pedagogy is the glorification of the religious orders devoted to teaching. Our systems of education are nothing but the results of the experience and efforts of successions of teachers. New avenues are every day opening to young men; new pursuits in life are soliciting their ambition and it is the aim of Pedagogy to facilitate the access to these new fields of labor by improved methods of tuition. The Roman Catholic School Commissioners have availed themselves of the most approved systems, they have tried to profit by all subsidiary and subordinate methods and improvements, in the art of teaching. Their body of teachers has been selected with care and its efficiency cannot be denied. Yet, very few people have an idea of the requirements of the profession. Do they know that a man even born with a natural talent for teaching needs to cultivate the talent by patient study and practice, before he can become a thorough accomplished teacher? Have you ever entered a school, during class-time? the pupils are all life and energy, they take hold of difficulties with courage, their ideas become clear, their very power of comprehension seems to gather strength. The ability to stimulate this intellectual activity, to give it at once momentum and progress, is the true measure of teaching power. To acquire and retain such an ascendancy over the minds of children, two things are essential: Ample knowledge and entire honesty of purpose—the possession of large stores of learning, the constant aiming at self-improvement and the looking for guidance to God the only unerring and unbounded source of light and knowledge. To help the young soul, to add energy, inspire hope, and blow the coals into a useful flame; to redeem defeat by new thought, by firm action. This is the work of true teachers. The Catholic Church, at all times, has given many such teachers

to the world, men whose sanctity of life equals their devotion to the education of children. Shall we speak of the Christian Brothers, whose name, in so many families of Montreal, has become a household word for all that is pure and good, of the many other religious institutions so nobly striving to do good as teachers? To work, alongside of them in the field of education, in which so many hands are wanted, is not to enter into competition with their labors, but to pursue the same aim and follow their example.

The best way to appreciate the working of the system followed in the schools under the control of the Roman Catholic Commissioners is to see if it answers the needs of the times. The application of scientific truths to the common industries of life is becoming every day more and more a necessity; commerce, navigation, agriculture, mechanical arts, depend largely on scientific laws. A general diffusion of scientific knowledge in all classes is therefore a want felt by the community. The Commissioners have in consequence given a great impulsion to the study of mathematics and natural sciences. The young men at the end of their course of studies, bearers of diplomas awarded by the Commercial Academies, find at once positions in the largest financial institutions of Montreal, and the increasing number of pupils justifies the Commissioners in the confidence that their duties have been properly discharged.

We know now what has been accomplished by the Board of Commissioners, we know what care they have taken to follow the system of tuition, the more conducive to success in the diffusion of knowledge. Let us examine what expenses other cities of the Dominion have incurred to secure the same benefit, and from the comparison of the figures, we may find the answer to the question: Is the system worth the cost?

The school tax, in every large city of the Dominion paid into the hands of the Roman Catholic Commissioners will give us a criterion by which a correct judgment may be formed. In the city of Ottawa, the school tax amounts to \$3.08 cts. per head. In London, to \$2.11 cts. In Hamilton, to \$1.65. In Toronto, to \$1.53 cts.—of course, we speak only of the School tax raised on Catholic property for Catholic educational purposes.

In Montreal, the tax amounted last year to \$1.22 per head on a Catholic population of 85,480 inhabitants. Were we justified in saying that Montreal, of all the large Catholic Cities of the Dominion, had the lightest burden of School tax? And after the details entered into of the system of tuition in the establishments of the Roman Catholic Board of Schools, and its results, are we not justified in affirming that the system is worth the cost?

Popular education, though it is expensive, tends to national wealth, by the direct effect which knowledge has upon individuals in making them more productive, and by the increased control which diffusion of knowledge gives to mankind over the powers of nature. A community is therefore wisely economical which spends largely and even lavishly upon popular education.—*Com.*

INAUGURATION OF THE CHURCH OF ST. COLUMBKILL, PEMBROKE, ONT.

Nothing can give greater satisfaction to our readers than to point out to them the progress of Catholicity in the neighboring Province, where our co-religionists do not enjoy all the advantages we so happily possess in Quebec. To use the words of a correspondent, "Thursday, the Feast of St. Andrew, Nov. 30th, was a day on which the Catholics of Pembroke, Ont., saw the realization of their fondest hopes, the triumph of their sacrifices, and the crowning of their liberal christian generosity in the gorgeous inauguration of their newly erected and magnificent church." Too much credit and praise cannot be awarded to the Rev. Doctor Faure the zealous pastor of Pembroke, for the indefatigable exertions he has made, to provide his parishioners with the necessary church accommodation, and not only that, but in procuring for them the advantage of separate schools, well conducted by efficient teachers. The sacrifices of the people have been great, not less than \$75,000, having been expended on these various enterprises; but the good work has been accomplished, and no one regrets the part he has been called upon to perform, no matter how onerous the burden may have been. The inauguration and blessing of the Church was truly a gorgeous and imposing ceremony. It was performed by His Lordship Bishop Duhamel, of Ottawa, assisted by the following members of the Rev. Clergy of the Diocese:—Rev. A. Champane; Deacons of honor, Rev. J. J. Collins and Rev. L. Ouellet; Deacon of the Mass, Rev. E. Rochon; Sub-deacon, Rev. P. McCarthy; Master of Ceremonies, Rev. J. Duhamel; Rev. D. F. Foley, Sec.; Paul Agnel, Portage-du-Fort; J. Bouvier, Osceola; James Lynch, Allumette; A. Chaine, Arnprior; D. J. Lavin, Packenham; Dr. O'Connor, Ottawa; L. Reboul, Hull; and P. Bouquier, Renfrew. Two sermons were preached on the occasion full of impressive eloquence. Rev. Dr. O'Connor, of Ottawa, spoke in English taking for his text, "Upon this Rock I will build my Church and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it," and was followed in French by Rev. J. Bouvier. Immediately after Pontifical Mass His Lordship in his usual impressive and solemn manner administered the Sacrament of Confirmation. One hundred and twenty were presented by their efficient pastor; some were ripe in years, the majority carefully prepared children, and also one convert who had the happiness to receive almost simultaneously several of the Sacraments of the Church. The reception given to His Lordship by the inhabitants of Pembroke will not soon be forgotten. No pains were spared to make his entry into the parish one of hearty welcome and the whole proceedings were marked by that liberality which characterizes the children of the Church when they find an opportunity of doing honor to their chief pastor. We regret that space does not permit us to give a full description of the church itself, and the imposing ceremonies of the benediction, we can only close this brief notice by trusting that the Catholic population of Pembroke may long have the happiness and advantage of the fatherly care and indefatigable exertions for their welfare, of their devoted pastor, who has already accomplished so much good in their midst.

A. M. SULLIVAN, Esq., M. P.

Our Irish exchanges announce the departure from Ireland, of one of her most gifted sons, Mr. A. M. Sullivan, M. P. for so many years editor of the *Dublin Nation*. Mr. Sullivan's name is a household word, in every Irish family, at home and abroad. Full of undaunted courage—perseverance and patriotism—he has battled through good report, and through evil report in the cause of his fellow countrymen—A man of extraordinary talents and sound judgment he has devoted himself to the task of guiding public opinion in his native land, and seldom have the best friends of Ireland had cause to regret that they had followed the path, he had pointed out to them. His departure from the scene of his labors, will be a great blow to the truly national cause. He may be replaced, but his late position can hardly be filled by a successor. It will require time and immense labor for any one to acquire the experience, and that remarkable self-control which distinguishes the gifted gentleman who has now taken his departure from the land of his forefathers. At the same time what a sad commentary on the lying reports of Irish prosperity and the prospects of the people of that unhappy country, to see the ablest, best and most talented of her children forced to seek away from her the advantages of which they are deprived at home. Mr. Sullivan is going to practice the legal profession in England, and in the bitterness of his heart, he is forced to point out, in the few and affectionate words of his farewell, that in Ireland, the greatest talents and the greatest assiduity, cannot hope to reap their rewards, owing to the Provincialized condition of the country, under the present regime. We hope that in the new field of Mr. Sullivan's labors, he may be able still to do battle for the good old cause, which his fellow countrymen feel shall always be dearest to his heart, wherever his lot may be cast. The Irish press takes occasion to pay a marked tribute to the many great and good qualities of the confere who has taken his departure from amongst them. The *Freeman*, of Dublin, says:—"On Wednesday Mr. A. M. Sullivan bade farewell to the staff of the journal with which he was so long and so honorably connected; in a few days he will leave Ireland for a new career in another land. The departure from amongst us of such a man is not an event which can be passed by without comment. For over twenty years Alexander M. Sullivan has been a prominent name in the annals of Irish journalism and politics, a leading citizen of the Irish metropolis, a notable figure in the recent annals of our country. The opinions of Mr. Sullivan has not always been our opinions. We have sometimes differed from his views; we have occasionally encountered him in the bracing and honest conflicts of public controversy; but among the staunchest of his staunch friends none will be found who entertain a more sincere respect for his many virtues, a more hearty admiration for those brilliant gifts with which Nature has so freely endowed him, or a more thorough appreciation of those personal qualities which have won for him a host of true and warm friends. The reason for Mr. Sullivan's departure from Ireland is no secret; he yesterday alluded to it himself. He goes to find in the great arena of the English Bar "that career open to the talents" which unhappily the cramped conditions of our provincialized life do not offer even to the greatest talents and the greatest assiduity. Twenty years ago a former editor of the *Nation* left Ireland to pursue his fortunes in a far distant land. In Charles Gavan Duffy a great colony beneath the Southern sky found her most gifted statesman; and when he visited Ireland a few years ago it was as a man who had drunk the cup of success to the dregs, who had tasted alike the sweets of power and popularity, and who bore a name honoured and revered throughout the Austral continent. Let us trust that a future as bright awaits Alexander M. Sullivan, and that his countrymen may note with pride and pleasure the steps by which he will fight his way to the front ranks of a great profession in which at all times Irishmen have more than held their own.

ST. PATRICK'S SOCIETY.

A meeting of the St. Patrick's Society was held last Monday evening, in their rooms, corner of St. Alexander and Craig streets, the President, Mr. H. Devlin, M. P., in the chair. The meeting was for the purpose of seeing what steps could be taken to increase the funds of the Society, so as to meet the wants of the poor during the coming winter. It was finally resolved, however, to send a deputation to the Revs. Fathers Dowd and Hogan, to ascertain as to the best means of coming to the relief of the Irish poor, during the coming winter; the Society having been convinced by its past experience that the relief afforded by it to applicants for assistance has not been applied so as to give effect to the intentions of the Society. The deputation will report at a future meeting of the Society.

ST. PATRICK'S CHOIR CONCERT.

A concert was given Wednesday of last week in Mechanics' Hall, by the members of St. Patrick's Choir, under the direction of Prof. J. A. Fowler. It was for the benefit of St. Patrick's Orphan Asylum and St. Bridget's Home. The Hall was well filled, and the concert went off admirably. We are unable through want of space, to do more than mention those whose valuable services contributed towards the great success achieved: Mrs. W. O. Farmer, Miss Fallon, Miss Shea, Miss Alice Crompton, and Messrs. T. O'Brien, J. Crompton, J. O'Neill, B. Shea and J. Shea. Mr. Fowler executed exceedingly well a solo on the piano.

We have received from Mr. Louis N. Beaudry a request to publish a letter from him in answer to a letter of His Grace Archbishop Lynch, which was copied from the *Toronto Globe* into our columns.—The letter is a very long one; not at all to the point, and has already appeared in the columns of the *Globe*. If Mr. Beaudry will curtail his remarks to the question directly at issue, we will give them full publicity; but we cannot be expected to devote a whole column of our space to a *rigmarole* of assertions that have no bearing whatever on the case as printed in our columns. Moreover, Mr. Beaudry's name has never been mentioned by us at all.

Mr. Thomas Furlong, of Ploton, has kindly consented to act as Agent for the *True Witness* in his locality.

The New Brunswick Legislature will meet about the 8th of February.