

The True Witness

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1896

OUR LADY CONTRIBUTORS.

It is hardly necessary for us to say that we highly appreciate the contributions of the gifted young ladies who have placed their thoughts, fancies and comments on current events at the disposal of our readers. For the latter we feel sure that we can speak with confidence from what persons well fitted to pronounce judgment on the subject have said concerning the writing of "K. Dolores," "Silas Wegg" and "E. C. S.," a notice of whose story, "The Darkest Hour," appears in this issue. The bright imaginings and happy reflections of "K. Dolores" and the versatility of "Silas Wegg," which have enlivened our columns during the past year, have imparted pleasure and instruction to old and young. To "Our Philosopher" and "Our Wayfarer" we are all indebted for new vistas of happy suggestions and impulses which, we hope, have not been unproductive of good. Is it not the writer's best reward to have the consciousness of touching sympathetic chords in the hearts of others and of having quickened to beneficent action sentiments and emotions that might otherwise have lain dormant and fruitless. Of this reward our fair contributors "K. Dolores," "Silas Wegg" and "E. C. S.," have ample store, and it gives us pleasure to express on our own behalf and that of our readers how highly we have prized and will always prize their contributions.

THE CHOICE OF BOOKS.

Mr. Weston Flint, statistician to the Bureau of Education of the United States, published some time ago statistics of Public Libraries in the United States and Canada containing 1,000 or more volumes. The Department of Education was established in 1867; in 1869 it was converted into a Bureau. From that time the importance of libraries as contributing to the work of education has been recognized, and in 1870 the task of collecting and collating statistics was begun. The first report was issued in 1876, five years having been spent in collecting data. It gave a list of 3,649 libraries of over 300 volumes and the total number of volumes as 12,276,964. In 1885 another list was published, amounting to 5,388 libraries of over 300 volumes, the number of volumes being 20,622,076—an increase of about 66 per cent. In the report for 1887, note was taken only of libraries of 1,000 volumes and over. The report of that date gave the number of such libraries as 1,777, containing 14,012,870 volumes. Of these more than 900, containing nearly 9,000,000 volumes, might be described as free. In 1893 another report was published on the same basis of restriction, the data having been collected in the year 1891. It represented the total number of libraries as 3,808, containing 31,167,354 bound volumes and pamphlets (the latter numbering 4,340,817). The average size of a library was 8,194 volumes, the average number of people to a library being 16,462. At the same time the Dominion of Canada contained 202 libraries, containing 1,922,866 bound volumes and 56,544 pamphlets. Of this number 152 are

credited to the Province of Ontario, 27 to Quebec, 6 each to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, 5 to Manitoba and the Northwest, 4 to British Columbia, and 2 to Prince Edward Island. It may be mentioned that a large proportion of the Ontario libraries are connected with Mechanics' Institutes in the country towns. It must also be remembered that the Parliamentary library, though situated in Ontario, really belongs to all the Provinces, in proportion to their representation. Formerly, the country towns and villages in this province used to have Mechanics' Institutes and Libraries, which were supplied on easy conditions by a law passed under the Union regime. It would, however, be probably hard to account for them now. The Province of Ontario claims 863,332 volumes, or almost sixty per cent of the whole, while Quebec has 490,374, or over thirty-three per cent. With the Parliamentary library proportionally divided, the difference would be considerably less.

For purposes of comparison, the statistician has divided the United States into five great divisions—the North Atlantic, South Atlantic, South Central, North Central and Western. The first of these divisions comprises New England, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The average number of books to every hundred of the population in the United States, as a whole, is given as 50; in the North Atlantic division it is 95; in the South Atlantic 48; in the South Central 42; in the North Central 36, and in the Western 55. The highest figure occurs in the South Atlantic—the District of Columbia, 924, but it is hardly fair to compare what is practically a city and the metropolis of the Republic with a State. The highest figure reached by a State is 257, the average of Massachusetts. Nearest to this average is Illinois, 218; Ohio coming next with 195; Rhode Island next with 161. The other averages that exceed 100 are Connecticut, 151; Michigan, 139; New Hampshire, 131; California, 111; and Missouri and Indiana 105 each. The average of Canada is under 50, and thus falls somewhat below the North Central division, but is more than double that of the South Central.

The Librarians of the United States have begun to recognize the fact that the mere taking of books from a public library is not always a test of intellectual, and still less of moral advancement. Among the statistics published from time to time by Librarians are averages of books read or consulted, and such records generally show an enormously disproportionate preference for fiction. As we ventured to make some remarks once before on the dangers of indiscriminate novel-reading, we need not recur to the subject at present. This, however, is a point on which we would lay special stress—that, as every school ought to have its library, so every teacher should direct his pupils in the choice of books. The education of a boy or girl really only begins in the school room. The hardest schooling comes afterwards. It is certainly a great thing to have acquired the rudiments of useful knowledge, and ability to read alone is a key to some of the greatest treasures of thought and imagination; to the records of the manifold past, to the *Gesta Dei* through His chosen instruments in all the ages; to the sacred volumes of Revelation and the minds of holy men on whom God has breathed His own spirit; to the lives of saints and heroes and patriots, and all whose deeds and words are exemplary and inspiring. By the same key it is allowed to seek the most refined relaxation for the mind overtaxed and to spend tranquil hours in innocent enjoyment, not without profit. But unhappily the same key may be used to enter doors which it is perilous to enter. Beyond the threshold may be infinite cause for regret and angry reflection on those who failed to give timely warning. It is for this reason that the public library to which old and young have unrestricted access is not an unmixed blessing. Even if it be formed with the most conscientious care and judgment and every possible safeguard against the admission of what is evil, the immature reader needs guidance and advice which, in all circumstances, may not be accessible. All the more reason why the teacher should use authority and influence to inform and direct his tender charges so that, when they come to fight life's battle alone and have to think and act for themselves, they may, by previous training, be capable of choosing what is true and pure and elevating and of rejecting what is vicious, frivolous or vulgar. Habits may be formed in reading as in thinking, speaking or acting, but the best time for forming them is that tender age when the mind can receive and retain impressions. The remembered counsel of a venerated teacher may prove of inestimable value to a young mind otherwise inexperienced and perplexed. "Would my teacher have approved of such a book? Or, is not this the sort of book against which he used to warn us?" By such criterion the young reader would be guided. But this criterion takes it for granted that the teacher had sound judgment and good taste as well as delicacy of moral sensibility. And in truth a teacher should be thus equipped.

EXHIBITIONS.

The exhibition has been so familiar an institution with us that some of its friends (and we ought all to be its friends) complain that city folk hardly do it justice. The country people have not any rate lost their interest in it, but here too the very progress that has been made in carrying out the idea works to some extent against the city enterprise. For it is no longer the great centres, as in our youth, that have the advantage of first class exhibitions. The younger cities, the larger towns, and in some cases important villages, have now their exhibitions, which, if they lack some of the features—to some degree extraneous to agriculture and industry—that confer prestige on the great central undertaking, make up for the loss by an increase of purely local attractions. The number of exhibitions held annually in the Dominion at the present time is extraordinary. From ocean to ocean there is always something of the kind going on or projected or in preparation. The same thing is going on all the world over. The international exhibition has become of regular occurrence. Some of us can remember the excitement that prevailed when the first great World's Fair was announced to take place in London. The idea was obtained from across the channel, and it is worthy of note that the first exhibition of Canadian products was associated with the inception of the movement in France. In the year 1789, when new France was administered by an Intendant of great patriotism and public spirit, M. Hocquart, the practice of making experiments in cultivation—the same idea that lies at the basis of our central and other model farms—was introduced in this province. The Intendant himself set the example by trying his hand at raising tobacco. He had the different kinds of woads sampled so that the people of France might know what our lumber was like. He sent home on the King's ships hundreds of barrels of tar and turpentine. Besides his tobacco—some of the leaves of which were thirty inches long—he had specimens of several other Canadian plants sent home from time to time. M. LaCroix, a physician of scientific tastes, assisted the Intendant in the work, naming, as far as possible, the plants that he prepared for transmission to France. Minerals—copper from Lake Superior and lead from Bay St. Paul, and other metals—were collected for the same purpose. At last, specimens of all these productions of the country being ready, they were properly arranged and sent home to France, where samples of Canada's woods, plants, grains, fruits (such as could be preserved) and minerals were placed on exhibition. This was really the first exhibition held of Canadian products—a sort of rehearsal having taken place in Montreal, Three Rivers and Quebec, before the various commodities were put aboard His Majesty's vessels. Mr. Hocquart's enterprise was not followed up as it ought to have been, though there did arise considerable trade with the French West Indies and the Metropolis, wheat being among the exports for several years until single cropping exhausted the land. It was more than a hundred years before the exhibition proper came into vogue amongst us, and a great many political changes had come to pass in the meantime. But in France the idea did not die out. About 1757, when the King of France was on the eve of permanently losing his great fortress of Louisbourg—augury of more sweeping loss to follow—the first attempt was made to hold an exhibition of the arts. England waited till the capitulation of Montreal before following the example. In 1761 the British Society of Arts held at its rooms an exhibition of machinery. Then there was a lull. The old monarchy came to a tragic end and France was slowly recovering from revolution and anarchy when, in 1798, a number of savants projected an industrial exhibition. It was not without a measure of success. Sixteen Departments took part in it, and although there were only 110 exhibitors, they were nearly all inventors or improvers of industrial processes, and the exhibition gave them the publicity that they wanted. In 1801 a second exhibition took place at the Louvre, after which the number of exhibitors on the former occasion was just doubled. This success instigated the Government to hold exhibitions every year, and in 1802 the third took place. Owing to the uncertainty in public affairs the plan of an annual exhibition could not be carried out. The fourth exhibition took place, however, in 1806, and then there was a long break. In 1819 the fifth was held and from that date exhibitions were held in Paris every five years.

By this time other countries began to think that what France found advantageous might also profit them. In Italy, Russia, Switzerland, Spain, Sweden and Norway, the experiment was tried. In 1825 England held an exhibition of improved processes and products of manufacture. In 1829 Dublin held one for the illustration of rail-roads. Local exhibitions were subsequently held in Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool and London. Hitherto, no

country had invited competition. Indeed, a hundred years ago, the notion that every country was the foe of every other prevailed, and was so openly professed that, when the series of French exhibitions was inaugurated in 1798, a prize was offered for the best scheme of inflicting a blow on British industry. By the middle of the present century a change of feeling had come about, and in 1849 M. Buffet, the French Minister of Commerce, proposed that foreign products should be admitted to compete at the next exhibition. The proposal was not accepted by the Chambers of Commerce, and then it was that England stepped in and enlarged upon the idea. On the 21st of March, 1850, the Lord Mayor of London gave a banquet to inaugurate a new thing under the sun—a great International Exhibition. It took place in the Egyptian Hall and speeches were made by Prince Albert, Sir Robert Peel, Lord John (afterwards Earl) Russell, Lord Derby, father of our late Governor General, and the French Ambassador. In 1851 it took place in Paxton's Crystal Palace and was industrially a splendid success, the exhibitors numbering 13,937, and more than 3,000 medals were awarded. As a forecast of universal peace, its purport was indeed over-estimated, but for the dissemination of new ideas and stimulation of invention and improvement in all the arts of life its results have been far reaching. The first French International Exhibition took place in 1855 under Imperial auspices and Canada was honorably represented. Meanwhile Dublin had followed London's example. In 1852 London made a second attempt to draw the nations from afar, and it proved successful. 4,500,000 persons had visited the Exhibition of 1851; in 1852 the number of visitors was 6,200,000. Since then the ends of the earth have met each other in friendly competition—the Chicago World's Fair crowning a series of such events which had no precedent in any former age.

Meanwhile, the idea has been applied to national general and local purposes with remarkable results. There is no domain of the arts and industries—including agricultural and every kind of invention and every branch of manufacture that has not had its exhibition. In Canada the first Provincial Exhibition was held in 1846, and during the twenty-one remaining years of the Union regime the experiment was often repeated. There had, indeed, been local exhibitions on a small scale given by the old Agricultural societies, and prizes were awarded for superiority in the products of the farm and the garden. But the Provincial Exhibition, as we know it to-day, was instituted fifty years ago. As already hinted, the accomplishment of Confederation greatly enlarged the scope of the country's agricultural and general industrial energies. A veritable revolution has taken place in the provision of facilities for agricultural education. Not only the Dominion Government, but the local administrations have been at enormous pains and expense to provide institutions where experiments may be made in all the industries of the farm—stock-breeding, dairying and the culture of the soil. There is not one of these subjects on which the most careful tests of methods have not been made and the results published in reports of recognized value. The Exhibition shows the improvements which these additions to the farmers' knowledge have effected, and many things besides, beyond the range of the farmers' industry. It is assuredly worth while to utilize such opportunities, and for those who go to learn there is not likely to be disappointment. The trouble is that the *embarras de richesses* makes it difficult for busy city people who are not personally interested to give the exhibits the attention they deserve. Country visitors who unite the useful with the pleasant and make the grounds their place of sojourn, profit most by the Exhibition as a means of education. The side-shows, of course, attract many, and some of them are purely for amusement. But others are instructive, and, taking them all round, our exhibitions ought to be encouraged by our citizens.

"THE DARKEST HOUR," a short story by "E. C. S." which we republish from the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, is sure to give satisfaction to our readers. The plot is laid in Montreal and is carried out with a skillful realism which gives the impression of fact. Although the *motif* is not unfamiliar, the convict who has been condemned unjustly being a favorite hero with many novelists and having furnished a theme to some of the masters and mistresses of fiction, the unmerited sufferings of Anthony Greyson do not fail to win our sympathy. The portraiture of Mr. Leduc is very happy and at once gains our approval; Mr. Wayington had not such convincing proof of Anthony's innocence, but he lacked the perfect confidence of true affection. The clerks in Mr. Leduc's office act after their kind. Preston, the villain, who committed a second and worse crime in order to conceal the first, is a character essential to the *drame*. For the shock of the disclosure that the friend whom he had trusted had

done him the foulest and most cruel of wrongs, Greyson was not prepared, but Mr. Leduc's kindness and unshaken faith in himself had disposed him to leniency. Besides, Preston's confession, though tardy, makes some amends to Anthony for his long agony by confirming Mr. Leduc's good opinion and clearing his character before Mr. Wayington and the world at large. That the friend who was the victim of his cowardice and treachery should have been a messenger of salvation to the dying sinner is an illustration of the *Imitatio* that does credit to the author's heart as well as to her head. "E. C. S.," we need hardly say, is one of our most valued contributors.

SOME NOBLE IRISH NAMES.

Some months ago we had the pleasure of placing before our readers some facts in the career of the present Archbishop of Halifax, Most Rev. Cornelius O'Brien, D.D. Not long since our readers had an opportunity of perusing an outline of the Hon. Judge Curran's lecture on the late Sir John Thompson before the Catholic Summer School at Plattsburg. We mention the names of these illustrious Nova Scotians—one a cleric, the other a layman, one an Archbishop, the other a statesman of the highest rank, one happily living and the other, alas, called away in the vigor of his genius for ends to us mysterious though known to the All-wise—because they indicate that if Irishmen do not claim any superiority of mental or moral gifts over the other races of the Dominion, neither do they admit any inferiority. It would, indeed, be difficult to find in the ranks of the hierarchy or of political service two better illustrations of grand gifts well used, of professional distinction and patriotic devotion. In the last issue of Donahue's Magazine we find one of these great men made the subject of a deserved eulogy, but not so much as an Irishman as in his capacity as a Catholic and a churchman. It is worth while to follow the author in his retrospect, not only because his article is of special interest to every Canadian, and more especially to Canadian Catholics, but also because, in dealing with Catholic progress in the Maritime Provinces, the writer deals largely with Irish fidelity, ability and enterprise. Not, indeed, that we wish to make a distinction between one nationality and another where it is a question of furthering the highest and noblest of causes—the cause of God and His Church. For the faith that we profess and honor is universal, and we are all Catholics with relation to it whatever our origin. At the same time it is surely a satisfaction when we consider that the ministrations of religion in the archdiocese of Halifax were first dispensed under other auspices, to find that the first incumbents of the archiepiscopal see were the sons of Irish immigrants, and were true to their origin. Mr. James Angus McKinnon, who wrote this sketch of "Two Maritime Provinces and their Catholic Centres," after a hasty glance back at the first French pioneers of Acadia—whose experiment in colonization has inspired so much poetry and romance—mentions the circumstances under which the city of Halifax was founded in the years 1749, and then hastens on to the year 1817, when it was made a Vicariate Apostolic. In 1842 it entered on a fresh stage as an ecclesiastical centre, when Right Rev. William Walsh, D.D., was consecrated the first Bishop of Nova Scotia. Ten years later it was raised to an archbishopric. On Archbishop Walsh's death in 1858, he was succeeded by Most Rev. Thomas L. Connolly, O.S.F. This illustrious prelate became known to many of us in this part of Canada through the late Hon. Thomas D'Arcy McGee. He was a scholar and a man of wide views, intensely patriotic and from the first a strenuous advocate of Confederation. At a time when the union cause was not a popular one in Nova Scotia, Archbishop Connolly espoused it with a foresight and a fervor that were alike characteristic.

But His Grace was not the less true to Ireland, being an example of that two-fold devotion which Irishmen in Canada must display if they would do their duty to the new land while ever bearing the old in affectionate remembrance. It is as a Catholic priest and bishop, however, that Mr. McKinnon speaks of this great Irish prelate. He tells us that "during seventeen years of devoted service his marvellous power of organization and strong personality gave new impetus to the Catholic cause and added much to Catholic dominion. His death was a national sorrow, even those most bitterly opposed to him as a Catholic prelate paying generous tribute to his worth as a man." Indeed, "as a man" there was no clergyman in Canada, of whatever rank or name, who counted so many friends and admirers among his "separated brethren." Every one who came within the sphere of his influence soon recognized that respect and affection were his due, no less than the admiration due to great abilities and the reverence due to exalted churchly rank and high spiritual gifts. It may be worth mentioning here that in his excellent lecture Judge Curran re-

ferred to the important historic fact that Nova Scotia had taken the lead in doing away with the injustice from which Catholics long suffered years before "emancipation" was carried in England. The city of Halifax was but a small town when the first protest against invidious distinctions on the ground of creed was uttered by its Protestant citizens, and "freedom's battle thus begun" won the victory at last. Now, there is no doubt that in a community men act and react on each other and the very fact that such a protest was uttered reveals the general character of the Catholics of Halifax—the Catholics that were in the future to have for representatives the greatest churchmen and statesmen in the Dominion.

To return to Mr. McKinnon—the vacancy left by the death of Archbishop Connolly was filled by most Rev. Michael Hannan. After five years of faithful service Dr. Hannan went to his reward. His successor was the present Archbishop, Most Rev. Dr. O'Brien, of whose talents and virtues we have already spoken. The Church in Halifax suffered a long to be felt loss when Monsignor Carmody, pastor of St. Patrick's church, passed away. The Rev. James Daly, who has labored for forty years among a devoted people, and whose beautiful church, the Star of the Sea, Meaganan, is "the pride of St. Mary's Bay," is another of Nova Scotia's churchmen of whom Irishmen are proud. It is impossible to think of Sir John Thompson without thinking of his friend, Right Rev. John Cameron, D.D., Bishop of Antigonish, whose silver jubilee was celebrated in June, 1895, in Saint Ninian's Cathedral. On that occasion Archbishop O'Brien paid a tribute to his episcopal brother that did honor to both prelates. We cannot follow Mr. McKinnon as he passes in review the great work done in Nova Scotia in the cause of religion, the activities of the various orders, the Christian Brothers, the Exult Fathers, the Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Enough to say that educational as well as religious opportunities are both in reach of all, and that between kindergarten and college no barrier intervenes.

Of New Brunswick Mr. McKinnon's survey is equally encouraging—more so, perhaps, when the terrible trials undergone are called to mind. The last visitation—the great fire of 1877—some of us can easily recall. The cholera belongs to a more distant period. The Right Rev. Wm. Dollard, D.D., who died in 1851, and who was succeeded by Right Rev. (afterwards Archbishop) Thomas L. Connolly, was the first Bishop of St. John. The Right Rev. John Sweeney, D.D.; the Right Rev. James Rogers, Bishop of Chatham; Monsignor Thomas Conolly, Vicar-General; the Rev. A. Robitaille, the Rev. A. J. O'Neill and several others, are the representative names in the New Brunswick record. Need we say that Ireland claims a share in the loving remembrance of these bishops and clergy as well as those of Nova Scotia. Other names mentioned are the Rev. Fathers T. Casey, F. J. McMurray, W. C. Gaynor, John J. Walsh, J. J. O'Donovan, C. Collins and Gallagher, and the Redemptorist Fathers Weigel, Donahue, Krien, Connolly and Trimpe. By making this use of Mr. McKinnon's labors we neither mean to insinuate that all the best Irishmen are Catholics nor that all the best Catholics are Irishmen. But surely we may take solace from the fact that so many of our fellow-countrymen do credit both to the old faith and to the old land.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

In answer to "A Subscriber," we may say that Rev. Father Drummond, S.J. is a son of the late Judge Drummond, and so far as we know, the Ottawa gentleman of the same name is no relation, nor even a Catholic. Rev. Father Drummond is now in Winnipeg, where he was sent prior to the death of His Grace Archbishop Taché.

DEATH OF REV. FATHER POINT.

Rev. Father Point, S.J., whose seventieth anniversary of his elevation to the priesthood was celebrated on the 26th of May last, died at 4.30 Saturday morning, at St. Mary's College, at the advanced age of ninety-five years. He was born at Rocroi, in the Department of Ardennes, France, on April 7, 1802. He began his studies in his native town, and completed them at St. Acheul. He made his theological studies at Rheims, and was ordained a priest on the 20th of May, 1826, by Cardinal Latil. Father Point was a deacon of honor to Mgr. Elie Daviau du Bois de Sanzay, Archbishop of Bordeaux and Primate of Aquitaine, one of the coadjuting prelates at the appointment and coronation of Charles X., the last Bourbon King of France, which took place on the 29th of May, 1825. He stayed in Rheims till 1839, acting as Vicar of the parish Cathedral and Dean of the parish of Vezy in the same diocese. He was an honorary Canon when he entered the Jesuit Order fifty-seven years ago. He came to Canada in 1842 and established a mission at Sandwich, Ont., and was Superior of the Upper Canada missions for seventeen years. He spent one year at the New York and one at the Saint Superior of the Quebec residence and held that position for 11 years. In 1873 he was transferred to St. Mary's College, this city, where he has lived ever since. His funeral took place on Monday morning, at eight o'clock, in the Church of the Gesù, and was largely attended.