

The True Witness

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,
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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1896

CITY SUBSCRIBERS in Ar-rears will receive their bills with this issue, and we have to request that they will remit amounts to this office by cheque or registered letter.

CATHOLIC PRESS UNION

It is time that we had a Canadian Catholic Press Association, the members of which would meet in conference at least once a year to discuss in a frank and fraternal spirit subjects cognate to the great objects which all would have at heart—the diffusion of Catholic literature and the advancement of the Catholic cause. These gatherings of Catholic publishers, Catholic journalists and Catholic litterateurs would promote community of thought and action in respect of all questions which intimately concerned them, and by tending to remove the friction which is too often produced by personal political preferences and affiliations, would result in a singleness of aim and in a concentration and unity of effort from which incalculable benefits would accrue.

Another good effect which would follow the formation of such an association would be the creation of a spirit of cooperation amongst those engaged on the Catholic press.

In many departments of journalism the syndicate plan has been adopted; and in every case its adoption has been a pronounced success. The news syndicates supply the journals which are members of them with useful and interesting intelligence from every point of the globe at a merely nominal cost. The story syndicates furnish their clients with high-class fiction at equally low rates; and other syndicates perform a singularly useful function in regard to general literature and articles on the leading topics of the day.

The system works well, because those who participate in it derive mutual advantages. Owing to the large number of its clients the syndicates can afford to pay a good price to those who write for it, and thus is able to secure the services of first-class authors and journalists; while the managers of the newspapers who deal with it are, owing to their reduced cost, enabled to provide their readers with a varied selection of good and original reading matter.

Would it not be advisable for those who are interested in Catholic journalism to organize one of these syndicates? The object for which those that already exist were established was to cut down expenses on one hand; and to make the financial resources at their disposal go as far as possible, on the other.

If the secular press, with the large capital which is at its disposal, and with the generous subscription and advertising patronage of which it is the beneficiary, has been obliged to resort to this co-operative system for the purposes mentioned, how much more necessary is it for the Catholic press to follow the same plan!

Were a Catholic newspaper syndicate formed in Canada a great change for the better would be effected in the Catholic press. Truth would be much more largely and effectively disseminated, the cause of religion would be much more efficaciously championed, the influence of Catholics as a body would be much more widely and practically felt at present, and the advent of the

Catholic daily paper, which so many desire to see in our big cities and centres of population, would not be long delayed.

Our Catholic neighbors in the United States would not be slow in imitating our example to the incalculable benefit of the Church in that country.

A conference of those interested in the progress of Catholic journalism should be held in Montreal at an early date, to take this project into earnest consideration and to adopt active measures for putting it into practice.

TO OUR YOUNG MEN.

To one of our distinguished fellow-citizens, who has added lustre to the record of our race in Canada, we owe the first sustained attempt to show the effect of our Canadian climate on people of old-world origin. We refer to Sir William Hingston's valuable monograph on "The Climate of Canada and its Relation to Life and Health."

Therein the curious reader will find some interesting comparative statistics, by which it is clearly shown that residence in Canada, under fairly favorable circumstances, have a tendency to build up the inherited physical and mental powers of the European races—the improvement being progressive from generation to generation. Sir William Hingston has also established the fact—welcome, doubtless, to our readers—that, so far as his tests were carried, the Irish-Canadian had the superiority in height and weight and muscular strength, over the descendants of both Scotch and English immigrants.

In the record of our Irish athletic societies we find pleasing confirmation of the results of Sir William Hingston's inquiries. The organization of the Shamrock Amateur Athletic Association has accentuated the value of training and exercise as a means of aid in the education of our young men of Irish stock.

There are some, we are aware, who look upon athletics with prejudiced eyes, and are disposed to think that a good many of those young people who devote a portion of their leisure to contests of strength or skill might find more profitable employment for their spare time. The charge has frequently been brought against the seats of learning in Great Britain and the United States, as well as in Canada, that they permitted too much of the time in which the students were supposed to be preparing themselves for the duties of life to be given up to athletic sports. There is no good thing which may not be abused and there may be some basis for the reproach. But they are lamentably at fault who conclude that all the young men who love athletic games are backward in their studies. So far is this from being the case that if the honor lists of the great universities were carefully examined, it would be found that not a few of the brightest and most diligent scholars were also the winners of prizes in the athletic field of glory. Nor would the result be greatly different if the ranks of business and the professions were subjected to a like scrutiny.

It would be discovered that not the least reputable and successful of the doctors and lawyers and merchants and manufacturers had been no strangers to the enthusiasm of the cricket, the lacrosse or the football field.

Certainly, if, in turning the pages of the three published annual Reports of the Shamrock Amateur Athletic Association, we are visited by regrets, it is not that so many of our young men have been attracted by the fascinations of athletic conflict, but rather that so many of them still remain without the pale of a fraternity in various ways so ennobling. We do not wish to exaggerate; we make allowance for all excesses and shortcomings. Nevertheless, it is our firm conviction that the Montreal Irishmen who can read the history outlined in those three Reports and take note of the self-sacrifice, the love of race, the desire to develop what is best in the native gifts of our people, to bring them together, to make them strong in unity of sentiment and aim and to win for them the respect of other races and creeds, must have the patriotic sentiment but feebly developed.

The history of the share of our people in promoting the Athletic movement in this city, and by example and association in other cities during the last fifty years or more, has never been written. Such a history would give scope for some interesting reminiscences—of the days, now far off, before athletics had become scientific, when our grandfathers or great-grandfathers played "common" on areas that are now populous thoroughfares, or played "ball" off any convenient gable.

The year 1860 is generally deemed to mark the close of the prehistoric period in the athletic movement. Then it was that the Shamrock Lacrosse Club was first organized. To some of our young champions of to-day this will be ancient history. To those of us who are more mature it is "long, long ago," and if any

of us have a clear remembrance of the pioneers, our memories are shaded with sorrow for so many who sleep their long sleep—

Some on the shores of distant lands
Their weary hearts have laid,
And by the strangers' heedless hands
Their lonely graves were made.

But others rest with their own in Canada, beyond the mountain there,—

And the same land that gave them birth
Has caught them to her breast.

It is, however, when we turn our gaze forward that the work done and still to be done by the S.A.A.A. has an interest for us all, old and middle aged and young. Too much we could not say of the generosity and patriotic spirit of some of the true Irish hearts that aided in raising that monument to our race in the environs of this city. All praise to them! But it is to our younger men that we would just now especially appeal.

There is a duty for them all to discharge and first they must identify themselves with the S.A.A. Association. That the aims or results of such an organization are solely physical none of our readers believe. The Association is primarily a grand common meeting-ground for the flower of our race and creed in Montreal and its vicinity.

There is nothing of which it is not capable as a mainspring for every movement with which Irishmen would be proud to have their names associated. And this is what we want our young men to realize in the first place. On this point we shall have more to say by and by.

THAT IRISH CATHOLIC DAILY.

A magnificent opportunity for the establishment of an Irish Catholic daily in Montreal has just presented itself.

The Herald, which has been published in this city for eighty-eight years, has abandoned the field of morning journalism, and is now an evening paper.

For the first time in nearly a century Montreal has but one morning newspaper printed in English, although the English-speaking population of the city has during that long period been continually increasing.

No more favorable occasion for the starting of an Irish Catholic daily newspaper in this city could occur.

All that is needed is the necessary capital of \$100,000.

Managerial and editorial capacity is at hand in abundance.

If those who have been so persistently complaining of the absence of an Irish Catholic daily have courage, enterprise, patriotism, and faith enough to provide the necessary funds, let them come forward and furnish them at once.

If they have not, let them be henceforth and forever silent upon the subject.

MISLEADING NEWSPAPER REPORTS.

An instance of the necessity of a Catholic newspaper is furnished by the reports which appeared in the daily press of this city of the lecture delivered in St. Mary's College Hall, on Thursday evening last, by Mr. Henry Anstin Adams, M.A., of New York, on "Culture and Character." Each of those reports will be searched in vain for the point emphasized by the distinguished lecturer, which was, as will be seen from the report which appears in the True Witness this week, that all culture is valueless unless it influences human character for good; unless it leads men and women to seek the truth, which, as Mr. Adams rightly declared, can be found only in the Catholic Church. We do not mean to insinuate that the point of Mr. Adams' lecture was wilfully ignored. We simply draw attention to the fact that it was ignored.

"Our Wayfarer's" column is, as usual, very interesting this week. The instance given of the manner in which the spirit of bigotry is sometimes inculcated in the minds of children conveys a moral, of which parents should take note.

Equally pertinent is the allusion to the habit which some young ladies have of making the confessional the subject of thoughtless and silly gossip. The rebuke will, it is to be hoped, have its effect.

There is a rumor current as we go to press, that the Government leaders in this Province have arranged to establish another English morning daily, and that the change recently made by the Montreal Herald was for the purpose of putting an end to the little flirtations which the Montreal Star has been indulging in recently with the Liberal Conservative party.

A movement has been started in Brooklyn for the purpose of inducing women to forego wearing high hats in churches. There is occasion for a similar effort in Montreal. It is for the ladies themselves to say whether the need for the inauguration of such a movement shall continue to exist.

During the week ending Sunday, December 13, relief was given at the St. Bridget's Night Refuge to 512 persons, 478 males and 38 females.

MRS. MURPHY'S BODY.

That the charred bones of poor old Mrs. Murphy should have been allowed to remain for over a week buried under the debris of the burned Barron Block, on the leading thoroughfare of our city, is a disgrace to those who are responsible for it. It is hard to think that such an exhibition of callous inhumanity, of indifference to the dictates of public decency, to say nothing of the promptings of ordinary Christian charity, is possible in Montreal. In any other civilized community—nay, in the roughest of backwoods settlements—scores of willing hands would have cleared away the debris in a few hours on the mention of the merest suspicion that a human body lay crushed and lifeless beneath it.

But if the public is to be blamed for its heartless apathy in the circumstances, what is to be said of the civic officials who excused their refusal to act on the red-tape ground that there was no money that could legally be applied to such a purpose? No condemnation of their conduct could be too severe. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been expended by our aldermen within the past few years, and not a word is said about it; and even if the search for the body entailed the expenditure of a few dollars the council would have voted it unanimously. But it would not have cost the city a cent. Half a dozen firemen could have done the work in half a dozen hours or so. If it was the body of a member of the brigade that was buried in the rubbish it would not have remained there long, for a score of firemen would have been set at work upon the ruins at once.

Why was the body of the eighty-year-old workwoman allowed to remain covered up in the rubbish so long within a few feet of our leading business street? Simply because it was that of a poor woman, because the crowds who have been standing around what is left of the building morning, noon and night since the fire, have no sympathy for the poor, and because the civic authorities are charitably contemptuous towards the poor. Had the body been that of a rich woman the city officials, the firemen, the crowd, would have been tumbling over each other in their efforts to get at it. But Mrs. Murphy was only a poor French-Canadian woman! The incident is a humiliating commentary upon our civilization and our Christian feeling.

PLEA OF THE ENGLISH HIERARCHY.

For many reasons that will be obvious to all thoughtful Catholics, the Declaration of His Eminence Cardinal Vaughan, Archbishop of Westminster, and the other Bishops of the Catholic Church in England, is of peculiar importance and timeliness.

The crisis with which the Catholics of England have for some years been face to face is, so far as educational principles are concerned, exactly similar to that with which the Catholics of Canada have had to deal. There are, indeed, points of difference in the circumstances of the two communities. Whereas in Canada, the Catholics for whom redress from unjust legislation has been sought, so far in vain, constitute but a small minority of the Catholic population—in England all Catholics without exception are personally concerned in the success of the reforms demanded.

Another point of vital interest is that in England among the leaders of Catholic opinion there is but one voice. Clergy and laity are as a unit as to the conditions by which Catholic sentiment is to be satisfied. No Catholic public man has gone out of his way to express contentment with a compromise that conscientious Catholics would scorn. The separate school—that is, an education in all respects Catholic, with Catholic teachers, Catholic text-books, Catholic institutions, under the direction and supervision of the Catholic Church—is accepted by all English Catholics as a sacred and inalienable principle of their agitation.

It is insisted that so long as the Catholic, simply because he is true to his faith and prefers even loss to any surrender of his conscientious beliefs, is placed at a disadvantage, either financial or educational, a great injustice is committed. Hitherto this wrong has been done openly and flagrantly by showing favor to the Board of non-Catholic schools, at the expense of the Voluntary schools, which include the Catholic schools. Year after year this partiality grew more marked and the consequences of it more intolerable, till at last the sufferers revolted. In response to their complaint, the Ministry introduced a measure making provision for increased financial support to the voluntary or denominational schools, but, after the Bill had passed to its second reading with a majority of 267, it became so burdened with amendments that, on the 28th of June, Mr. Arthur Balfour announced its withdrawal. That policy, though it was sadly disappointing to those for whose benefit the measure had been framed, was accompanied by an assurance that the voluntary schools would

not suffer by the postponement. It is in view of this promise and of the approach of the usual season for the assembling of Parliament that the English hierarchy has issued this last emphatic appeal.

The opening words are especially worthy of attention. "We desire," the Bishops declare, "by all means in our power to promote the welfare and prosperity of the nation." This sentence is noteworthy both for the noble aspiration to which it gives expression, and because it shows that the aims of the Bishops in England coincide with those of our own episcopate. It is not a privilege that is asked for—something exceptional and out of harmony with the highest purpose of the national life, but "a national system of education that shall meet the wants and wishes of the people and shall be proportionate to the requirements of the day in which we live."

There is a group in the British Parliament, as there is in our own, which is opposed to denominational schools—part of it to any kind or measure of religious teaching. The Bishops do not interfere with those men and those whom they represent in the enjoyment of their rights. What they insist on is that Catholics should have equal rights, and they put their case as forcibly from the practical standpoint of the public well-being as from that of allegiance to conscience. "We declare," the appeal continues, "that to make Catholic children patriotic and good citizens something more than secular instruction is needed. They must be trained and educated in the religious principles which command their entire assent and reverence as motives of life and conduct. Teach them God according to their conscience and they will become law-abiding and industrious citizens." These words contain the key to the whole question. Agherism could be set before a patriotic statesman, a father of a family or a citizen bent on doing his duty to his country, in order to make provision for the generations that are to come. It is a race the sympathy of all who pretend to be moved by patriotic sentiment.

But how are these great fundamental principles to be carried out honestly and fairly and fruitfully?

In reply to this question the Bishops pledge themselves to do what all fair-minded men will consider fair and just. As the Board School system satisfies a large proportion of the people, and the remainder cling to their denominational schools, let both classes of schools, they urge, be maintained equally from the public purse.

If the children that attend the Board schools have a right (as the State admits) to be educated with the best possible advantages, it surely is not honest that the children who attend voluntary or denominational schools should be amerced for their fidelity to their religious convictions. If the Board schools deserve to be supported by public money, it is only the barest justice that the cost of maintaining the voluntary schools should be met in the same way, wherever and whenever the natural or secular education therein imparted is equal to that of the rural institutions. "No national system of elementary education can flourish which is based on financial inequalities, or on penalties exacted and paid for conscience sake."

This appeal is urged with all the greater reason and force, because in many localities the Catholics are poor and have no resources to meet such burdens. This is a plea which we can understand in Canada also.

The Bishops support this plea with arguments which are sure to carry weight with all who reflect. To condemn the poor to inferior education is a course that is certain "to tell fatally upon the common weal." It is a crying injustice to the teachers of poor localities who, without help, must labor for miserable compensation. And, more serious still, the spectacle of such a wrong must inflame the minds of many with resentment against authority.

There are details in the appeal that have no analogy for us, owing to the difference of our situation, but we can all appreciate the demand with which it closes for "equality in maintenance and the right of parents to educate their children in their own religion without on that account being penalized and pauperized in the matter of secular instruction."

THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE.

How many people in Montreal, outside of the newspaper offices and the Sheriff's Court, ever see a copy of the Official Gazette? Very few, indeed. And yet the information it contains regarding the sales of property by the Sheriff, bankrupt estates, and other matters which are published exclusively in the Gazette, are of the greatest importance to citizens of Montreal. This is the largest city in the Dominion. Its population is now about a quarter of a million, and is annually increasing. Announcements concerning Montreal people and property vastly outnumber those relating to the people and property in all other parts of the province put together. The Official Gazette is published only in Quebec. There can be no gainsaying the statement that an edition of it should be also published in Montreal.

THE CHURCH IN FRANCE.

French statesmen are beginning to realize how futile and unpatriotic it is to continue the persecution of the Church which began with the advent to power of the Masonic and atheistic element of the Republic after the resignation of Marshal McMahon from the presidency. As the recent debate in the French Chamber of Deputies on the Ecclesiastical Congress at Rheims proves, their attitude towards the Church has undergone a complete change.

The Melne cabinet was in a rather shaky condition, and had narrowly escaped defeat more than once. It was expected that a vote of censure moved by a socialist deputy would give it its coup de grace. The proposed condemnation was claimed to have been merited because the Melne government had declined to forbid the Catholic bishops to assemble at Rheims.

The Abbé Lemire, one of the most eloquent members of the Chamber of Deputies, made a forcible speech in defence of the action of both the Government and the bishops. He protested vehemently against the assumption that prelates and priests could only meet by favor for the discussion of matters which interested them. "We believe," he said, "that in this country there is something better than government favor. That something is common right. And it is common right that we claim. We did not ask the Government for its permission to meet, for it would probably have refused our request. Besides, we did not want to put ourselves in the position of beggars. What we did as priests at Rheims was ready to do again; and I should like to know how the Government could prevent us."

To the surprise of many, this speech of the valiant Abbé Lemire was loudly cheered on the Republican as well as on the Right side of the house. Premier Melne stated frankly that he and his cabinet had resolved to stake their political existence upon the point which had been raised by the vote proposed by the socialist deputy—whether the government was going to make war upon the church. The government would not make war upon the church. On that principle his cabinet would stand or fall. The vote of censure was rejected by 301 to 229, and a resolution approving the declarations of Premier Melne was carried by 324 to 225, a majority of 99.

This is the greatest victory that Catholics have won in France for many years; and it may be taken as marking the establishing of more cordial relations between Church and State in that country.

CHURCH LANDS WILL NOT BE TAXED.

The City's Charter Amendments Bill has fared very badly at the hands of the Private Bills Committee in the Legislative Assembly.

The clause enabling the city to levy a tax on church lands was struck out, as we expected it would be, without any discussion. Not one member of the committee had a word to say in its favor.

Two clauses permitting the city to borrow nearly five million dollars were struck out also. This was also a wise act. These clauses were inserted in the bill by the aldermen who favor a policy of reckless extravagance.

Had the prudent proposal of Mayor Wilson Smith been adopted by the council it would have passed the committee and, no doubt, have been adopted by the legislature.

THE LORETTA MAGAZINE.

We have received the manuscript copy of the Loretta Magazine, which is issued under the auspices of the Loretta Reading Circle, St. Mary's parish, Montreal. The editor of the Loretta Magazine is Miss S. Sutherland; and the officers of the Loretta Reading Circle are: President, Miss Street; secretary, Miss Jones; assistant secretary, Miss Hefferman. The contributions are very meritorious, evincing literary talent of no common order. The Loretta Magazine has our best wishes. The question, however, suggests itself: Whether more good would not be done if such gifted contributors, instead of confining the exercise of their talents to a publication the circulation of which must necessarily be very restricted, would send their articles to the True Witness, which is prepared to establish a special department for them, and in which they will be read by a large and appreciative circle.

It is a significant sign of the times, as well as a peculiarly striking change in the attitude of the leaders in the Protestant Ministerial Association towards French Protestants, that they have elected as their chief officer of their organization the Rev. A. L. Therrien, one of the few French Protestant ministers of this city. The P. M. A. must be making a bid for a few more recruits.

The Christmas number of the Toronto Globe has been published. It is an exceedingly interesting publication, profusely illustrated with well executed engravings, and replete with varied and entertaining reading matter. It is in every respect a credit to Canadian journalism.