

# THE CASKET.

\$1.00 PER ANNUM.

A CATHOLIC JOURNAL NON-PARTISAN IN POLITICS.

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## THE CASKET.

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 31.

We have received the first number of *Acadiensis* a quarterly magazine devoted to the interests of the Maritime Provinces of Canada. It is edited and published by David Russell Jack at St. John, N. B. The subscription price is \$1.00 per annum. The initial number is a very creditable one.

The editor of the *Western Watchman* will have the sympathy of our readers, who know him well, at least by reputation, in the death of his mother which occurred on Friday last. From the references made to her in the addresses presented to Father Phelan on the occasion of his Silver Jubilee, it was evident that the relations between mother and son were of that rarely beautiful character which we read of in the life of St. Augustine and of the great Cardinal-Bishop of Poitiers. Margaret Phelan was indeed of that race of valiant women who are described in the last chapter of the Book of Proverbs. May God grant her eternal rest!

The *Catholic Columbian* says: "It is almost a national custom to make sport of sacred things." True; and the humorous papers, and many of the serious papers which would like to be humorous, give far too much of their space to jests concerning things which ought not to be joked about. Who has not realized that the bounds of propriety are overstepped, and harm done, every day, by the popular jests about the abominable vice of drunkenness? The *Columbian* cites marriage, divorce, and other subjects as being improperly made the butts of would-be humorists. It is too true. And ridicule is one of the most powerful influences which can be brought to bear upon the minds of men.

If Denis A. McCarthy's "Round of Rimes" has not yet been reviewed in these columns, it is because the notice of the arrival of the book in the customhouse was overlooked until last week. The hasty glance we have been able to give the little volume has delighted us. We can admire even "Slim Piet" and "Boer and Briton." One difference between these pieces and Maurice Brown Kirby's "Fuzzy-Wuzzy" and "Bobs," is that the former are clever parodies, the latter are not. Mr. McCarthy's pro-Boer sentiments we have no quarrel with; they are such as may be expected from any one who sees things from his point of view. But Mr. Kirby's last effusion was so barbarous an atrocity that it would be a kindness to suppose that its composition was due to *mania a potu*.

"Free Cuba," is a cry which is only heard nowadays from the thirsty throats of the patriots (so-called) in convention assembled in that Island. The well-remembered cry no longer echoes in the streets of American cities. The yellow press is after fresh sensations, and the Stars and Stripes still floats over Cuba, and will float there for a long time to come. The "patriots" may shout "Cuba libre," but no one will heed them. Maximo Gomez is out after the Catholic Church, having given up Uncle Sam for a bad job. The famous resolutions of Congress are forgotten, except when inconveniently remembered by the Supreme Court of the United States. Dewey is forgotten. They do not even "remember the Maine." They mean to keep Cuba; and they always meant to do so. They mean to

keep the Philippines too, if Aguinaldo will let them. The Americans are a great people, and their ability to misrepresent their sentiments and intentions may be called "great" though not "grand."

The *Sacred Heart Review* has an excellent article on the "treating habit." There is no doubt—no man who knows the world at all can doubt—that the unfortunate practice of treating leads every day many a good man along the terribly easy slope, from occasional drinking in small quantities, to regular, every-day drinking. Those who practice the habit of treating, besides wasting their money, cannot escape responsibility for the evils which ensue to those on whom they habitually press intoxicating liquor. Liquor is well recognized to be dangerous and injurious to the majority of men. The exceptions to the rule are known to be rare. It is well known to be the lamentable fact that the habit of intoxication can be formed at any time in life, and that, for a man who drinks at all, the difficulty is to avoid forming it, even in the end of his life. We know of a man, now dead, who was highly respected and who deserved that respect, who was never known to be intoxicated until he was well past the three score mark in his life, and who was then in his age and growing feebleness easily overcome by the liquor habit and had to be watched even in his last illness, lest he should intoxicate himself. Is a poison which can ruin a man, body and soul, on the last lap of life's course, a thing to be trifled with?

The *Catholic Record* has a very good remark about the "new unity" of Protestant sects. It says they (the advocates of the scheme) "believe that the cure for all the ills of humanity is an ointment compounded of paganism and of what is styled philanthropy." Philanthropy is an excellent thing in its way, and we have no objection to seeing their rich men open their purses and give freely to relieve the needs of the poor; but it is amusing that anyone should think that that is all the religion one needs. It is serious, however, to have the press of two countries spreading the heresy that to do good to others will save one's soul, no matter how many of God's commandments one tramples under foot. This is the gist of the new movement, as it is called. The sects are requested to sink their differences—in other words, principles are to be cast away as impeding progress in the scavenging of the by-ways of human misery. The error is very apparent, but very taking and enticing, all the same. If Jay Gould could have bought health and life with money or brains he would still be on earth. If men could purchase heaven with money, or propitiate the divine wrath with kindness to their fellow men and courtesy and consideration of manners, no one would be damned.

We have known a man, when rebuked by his pastor for cursing and swearing at a neighbour, to reply that he did not see why he should pay high-flown compliments to one who had treated him so badly. Equally reasonable is the *Pilot's* remark that THE CASKET lectures American journalists because they do not stand in awesome admiration of the British nobility and gentry. Our friend has missed the point completely. We have merely insisted that even if a man has the misfortune to be a British peer, he should not on that account be refused the protection which the Eighth Commandment was designed to extend to all men without distinction. The *Pilot* had a leading article lately on the Duke of Norfolk, in which it very broadly hinted that this nobleman had been guilty of bad taste and even discourtesy in drinking the health of the Queen and excluding the Pope and the King of Italy from the toast-list at a banquet in Rome. The press despatches stated that both the Pope and the Queen were toasted, and we have yet to learn that a loyal Catholic is supposed to recognize any other King in Rome but Leo XIII. Does not the *Pilot's* motto seem to be "Whenever you see a head, hit it,—if it be an Englishman's head." Again, when Lord

Roberts approves the sentence of death passed upon Lieut. Cordua he is called an assassin; when General De Wet causes a peace envoy to be shot, he is merely said to have shot a spy. Did the *Pilot* use the same scale in these two cases? We attach the same weight to the utterances of the Americans who call Roberts the assassin of Cordua, as we do those of the Englishmen who called General Washington the assassin of Major André. We have also the presumption to believe that we can hold the scales fairly between the *Pilot* and THE CASKET if it comes to a comparison of the present with the past weight of the two journals. The present editor of the *Pilot* is in no wise inferior to his predecessor as an artist in words, but he falls immeasurably below him in breadth of mind and fairness to opponents. The present editor of THE CASKET is immeasurably inferior to his predecessor in literary skill, but he flatters himself that he is quite as broad in his views and as ardent in his love of fair play. And so, "honors are easy."

In the reign of Charles II., as is well known, the manners and morals of English society were extremely corrupt. The conditions were such that that period of history has been held up, for the last two hundred and fifty years, to the public mind as a startling illustration of the depths of degradation to which a nation can descend when its people throw off the restraints which are imposed on God's commandments as well as by the welfare of society at large. The King, whose memory has no honour from anyone who knows what he was, who was so deeply engaged in unlawful pleasures that he took little heed of his duties as a sovereign, himself led his people in the mad carnival of shame. He had many accomplices, and among those who ministered to his shameful and beastly pleasures was a woman named Nell Gwynne. She could not even claim to have been a good woman led into an evil life by Charles. She entered his court as a professional bawd, and such was her place there, as all the histories of England tell us. This woman had no merits except beauty and a ready tongue. She was illiterate, and her conduct and habits were disgusting. How, then, are we to explain the fact that in this great twentieth century, the theatres in New York and Montreal should be found rivalling each other in the production of plays which have this wretched creature for their "heroine" and her life and sins for their story? The fact is that large audiences are today, in cities which are wont to boast loudly of their advancement and enlightenment, flocking to see portrayed in realistic manner the disgraceful antics of a prostitute who has been dead for two centuries and a half, and the papers tell us that the story is so romantic. Indeed! How very romantic, and how very, very strange it is to have it impressed on one in this way that which every person who has read a school history knows, namely, that Charles II., an idler and a vagabond, although a King, made a harem of his palace in the middle of the 17th century. There is no need to insist on the real reason for the production of such plays. Plays and books which rake up the sins of two centuries ago are written and produced to gratify the morbid and vicious imaginations of people who like that sort of thing (and a great many people do like it), just as books and plays which deal with the same sins in modern times are written to please the same; and the delving in the sepulchres of the past is occasioned by the fact that theatrical managers and writers have constantly to seek new sauces with which to dress the same old nasty dish for jaded appetites. And we are in the 20th century, and the modern theatre is one of the boasts of our time.

There is so much truth in the subjoined remarks of the *Pittsburg Observer* that we need not expand them or add to them. Their force is in their truth, and it is much to be regretted that Catholics need to be reminded of their neglect to do a thing which is so obviously to their interest as to support a Catholic paper. Our friends of the Protestant denominations do not fail to support the papers whose pro-

posed object is to maintain the rights and advance the interests of those denominations. Why do not our Catholic friends take hold and help to make the Catholic press successful? There is hardly a reader who could not easily influence two or three others in his neighbourhood to become subscribers:

The way to have a strong Catholic paper is for every family to take a copy of it and to pay for it, and for every parish, society and merchant to advertise in it. There is no danger that it will have too much support. The more money it receives, the more money it can spend to buy articles and to get news. The way to have a weak Catholic press is for the people not to subscribe for it, or, after taking it, not to pay what they owe for it, so as to exhaust its capital, and for every one who has any organization to maintain or any business to carry on, or any project to boom, to ask for free advertising in it and to get mad if this is not granted. The Catholic papers are not endowed or subsidized by the Church. They must get along or sink into failure on the support that is accorded them. The more support they obtain, the better they will be. The less their support, the weaker their force and the sooner their end.

Several of the newspapers have published news items, bewildering to Catholics, concerning memorial services for the Queen in various Catholic Churches. That the industrious journalists have spun these reports, spider-like, out of their own inwardness, is evidenced by the following extract from Cardinal Vaughan's pastoral letter read in the churches of the archdiocese of Westminster last Sunday:

Of public religious services for the dead the Catholic Church knows none but such as she has instituted for the souls of her own children. At the same time we may remind you that it is lawful to those who believe that any persons who have departed this life in union with the soul of the Church, though not in her external communion, to offer privately prayers and good works for their release from purgatory. Gladly and eagerly shall we join in the purely civil and social mourning that will be generously offered by the nation to the memory of such a Queen. Where there are church bells they will be tolled, and the national flag may be placed at half-mast either within or without the precincts of our churches. We fully and anxiously share the national sorrow and the anxiety inseparable with such a period. We trust and pray that the noble traditions established by the mother will be carried on and perfected by her son. The attachment of Catholics to the throne and dynasty is beyond suspicion.

The public prayers offered in our churches were not for the late Queen but for the new King.

The favourite theme of those who lead the boasting as to the superiority of Protestant countries over Catholic is the alleged condition of Spain and France. The public affairs of the latter country are, of course, in the hands of unscrupulous men. It is true also that her cities are the centres of a great deal of immorality. Also, she has produced many shameless authors. These last are popularly supposed to be representative of French literature as a whole, though few educated men hold this mistaken opinion. There is, however, as the backbone of France, her peasantry, and they are not immoral nor vicious. From the humble homes of rural France, come forth the true, God-fearing, Soldiers of the Cross. We are making an argument which will appeal to Catholics, though perhaps not to others, when we say that the nation which can supply a nation of Catholics with priests and at the same time give 7,745 missionaries to foreign and heathen lands, must be sound at the core. Think what it means! France has between 35,000,000 and 40,000,000 Catholics. These must be served; and besides serving them, she sends to foreign lands nearly as many priests as there are in the United States. As to Spain we recall Goldwin Smith's sound and thoughtful distinction, when, in speaking of that country he said that a decadent governing class did not mean a decadent nation.

We confess to reading with mixed feelings that on-the-whole-worthy publication, *Our Dumb Animals*. Sometimes we admire it. In the last number which we have seen we admire its manly utterances on the case of cadet Booze and hazing and on a number of other subjects on which its views are sound beyond all question. No one can help but admire, also, the splendid home and family sentiment exhibited in some of the contents of that paper. Nor are we wholly in disagreement with that which seems to occupy most of the paper's space, to wit, protesting against the brutal

treatment of dumb animals. But, we cannot escape from the feeling that the writers of this paper hold the feelings of dumb animals to be of fully as much importance as those of men, women and children, if not of greater importance than those. This exaggerated care for the feelings of animals is productive of harm, not because it is in itself wrong, but just because it is exaggerated. It gets to be a hobby; and, moreover, there is the loss of the sense of moral proportion, so to speak, which ensues from every error and exaggeration of this kind. Writers on the prevention of cruelty to animals habitually fail to draw the line between things which they ought to denounce a man for doing, and things which it is merely their province to exhort him not to do. For instance, in this number of *Our Dumb Animals* Vice-President Roosevelt is denounced for two things, namely, first that he was instrumental in bringing about needless war, and secondly, that he is now on a shooting trip and is destroying the lives of some animals. How utterly out of proportion are these two charges. In the denunciation of one alleged deed, a crime is charged which is unanimously held by all civilized races to be a crime of the greatest gravity; in the other an act is charged which only a very few people deem to be an offence at all. Yet this great crime and this new-made offence are bracketed together. A faddist is nearly always intolerant. We have heard of a case where a gentleman's coachman drove up to his office door in a carriage in which were seated that gentleman's wife and children. To the horse's head a check-rein was fastened. This check-rein is one of the pet abominations of the dumb-animal-faddists. This gentleman believed that it was an unnecessary cruelty. The coachman, who knew the high-spirited horse better than he did, differed from him in vain. He cut the check-rein with his pocket-knife and drove off, and the horse proved him wrong by taking control of the situation, and an accident resulted by which his wife was killed. What would the editor of *Our Dumb Animals* think of such a case? Does it not illustrate the danger of seeking to impose our views in such matters on all-comers and in all cases? Yet this is what the prevention-of-cruelty people gravely do, and they would invoke the law indiscriminately in all cases—they do so every day. And when there is not law to suit them, they would seek to put their own views into the form of statutes.

Within a week Montreal has had three serious fires. They have all occurred in the business district, and among the destroyed buildings is the handsome Board of Trade structure. The losses to the insurance companies on the buildings and stocks totals \$2,026,000. As a result of these heavy losses the Montreal fire insurance underwriters have increased the insurance rates fifty per cent. on mercantile risks. They have also established a conflagration district, which includes the entire wholesale district of the city, and levied an extra twenty-five cents per hundred on mercantile property situated therein.

The Empress Dowager of China is trying to get better terms from the Powers. She says she cannot punish Ting Fu Hsiang or Prince Tuan because they are surrounded by friendly troops. She also says that China cannot protect foreigners from bandits if she is not allowed to import fire arms. She would like to raise tariff and mining duties so that foreigners doing business in China would pay the indemnity demanded from the powers. Li Hung Chang has authorized the American Protestant missionaries to collect indemnities from villages where outrages were committed. Russians and British are having a clash over Russia's claim to two islands in the Gulf of Pechili ninety miles distant from the Russian post at Port Arthur. It is said that two first class British battleships have been ordered to hurry to Chinese waters in connection with the matter.

Diplomats at Washington are displeased because the flag at the White House was half-masted for Queen Victoria, when it was not done for the death of other sovereigns. The President explains that it was done because of her greatness as a woman and the special friendship she had shown to the United States.

As a result of the Congressional investigation into the hazing at the United States military Academy at West Point, N. Y., the students have decided to abolish the practice.