

## A FRIENDLY CHAT With Irish Catholic Electors.

From a Regular Contributor.

That the Irish Catholics of Montreal are still losing ground in the public life of the city has been very forcibly proved by the action of a majority of the members of the City Council in depriving them of the only chairmanship which has been regarded for a quarter of a century as belonging to them as a sort of unwritten agreement, hitherto scrupulously observed by both Protestant and French Canadian aldermen.

The resolution by which that chairmanship was taken away from the Irish Catholics was proposed and seconded by two Protestant aldermen, and carried by the aid of the votes of Protestant and French Canadian aldermen combined.

Two Protestant chairmen and not one Irish-Catholic chairman—that is the result of the latest aggression. It is the climax of humiliation, and the final warning against a continuance of the past and present policy of indifference and disunion which has made this conduct of a majority—a majority of only one, it is true, but still a majority—of the City Council the crowning act of a long series of similar injustices. It would be useless to keep on denouncing and protesting against these injustices. That would be a mere waste of time, waste of voice, waste of ink, waste of space.

Action—united, vigorous and determined action—is the only remedy for the ills from which Irish Catholics of Montreal suffer. Action, not in one or two wards, but in every ward in the city; for in every ward in the city there are Irish Catholics who only need the proper kind of organization to secure for themselves the power to defeat any candidate they wish, be he Protestant or French Canadian.

Yes; the proper kind of organization is all that is needed. This may seem to some to be going too far, to be too optimistic; too enthusiastic. But let me cite an example which would guide and cheer us in this matter.

When Irishmen resident in the various cities and towns in England several years ago were asked by the leaders of the Irish National Party to help them to force either of the two great British Parties to take up the question of Home Rule, the answer that came from all of them was, in effect, "We would be only too glad to help you; but how can we do it? Situated as we are, we are powerless to help you." "We will show you the way," said Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M. P., and Mr. Timothy Harrington, M. P., and the way was shown. To Mr. Harrington, who was a genius for organizing, was entrusted the Home Rule Propaganda in the English electoral districts where Irishmen resided. T. P. O'Connor then founded the Irish National League of Great Britain, of which he is still the president.

The first thing Mr. Harrington paid attention to was the electoral lists. Every Irishman in sympathy with Home Rule, and resident in England, and entitled to vote, must have his name on the list. "Register! Register! Register!" was the cry that was raised. It was hard uphill work to induce those Irishmen to register their names. Meeting after meeting, addressed by Irish Home Rule members, had to be held; and it was even necessary to make personal house-to-house canvasses, to argue, to plead, and even to coax. At last the work was completed; and the Irish voters were in many places astonished at their numerical strength. In the majority of districts, however, their numbers were small.

To found a branch of the League in every constituency in which Irish voters, no matter what their number, dwell, was the next step. This

entailed more hard work; but it was cheerfully performed, for once Irishmen are roused to the point of enthusiasm there is no obstacle that they will not attack, and no task, be it ever so difficult or discouraging, that they will not undertake. The branches were formed, each member was no longer a Liberal or a Conservative as he had been formerly. He belonged to a new and separate party—the Home Rule Party.

The order from the headquarters was that, whenever an election should take place, each candidate, Liberal and Conservative, should be asked in writing whether, if elected, he would vote for Home Rule; and that the members of the branch should vote and work for the candidate who was in favor of Home Rule.

The immense power of those branches of the League was shown when on the eve of a general election, the Irish leaders issued an order that they should vote solidly for the Conservative Candidate. Up to that time few candidates had declared themselves in favor of Home Rule. It was Liberal candidates who for the most part so declared themselves; and in almost every instance they were elected by the vote of the organized Irish Nationals, who learned the lesson that a dozen, or even half a dozen, independent votes can often defeat or elect a candidate by working and voting against him or for him as the case may be, I use the word "order" advisedly, because so thorough was the discipline of the members of the League, and so genuine was their patriotism, that they looked upon every request or instruction issued from headquarters as a command which it was their duty to obey. This order to vote for the Conservatives was given because the Liberals as a party had refused to make of Home Rule a plank in their platform. It was difficult for a great majority of the Leaguers to obey that order; for a large number of Liberal members had spoken and written in favor of Home Rule.

"It will almost break my heart," said one, "to vote against Mr. ——. He has been a good friend of mine for fifteen years, and he is a Home Ruler. But the cause demands that I shall vote for his Conservative opponent this time, and I should be a traitor to that cause if I refused to do so." The elections came on. How did they result?

The change in the organized and independent Irish vote in Britain, from one set of candidates to another, had this marvellous effect: It hurled Gladstone and the Liberal Party from power, and put Salisbury and the Conservative Party in their place. Of course Irishmen who had done this were severely criticized and bitterly denounced. But what did they care? They were working unitedly for a cause sacred to them, and they could continue to work until that cause triumphed. The next time the Liberals met they nailed the Home Rule colors to their mast, and the Irish vote in Britain was, as a consequence, cast solidly for them. The result everybody knows. The Liberals passed a Home Rule Bill through the House of Commons by a majority of twenty-five.

Irish Catholics entitled to vote in municipal elections have only to imitate the policy pursued by their compatriots in Britain, in order to hold the balance of voting power in every ward in Montreal, from St. Gabriel to Hochelaga. The present is a propitious time to begin the campaign. The municipal elections will be held a year hence; and if a start be made at once, the organization of the Irish Catholic forces will be complete in a few months before polling day.

## The Fifth Commandment.

State Senator W. J. Donovan, of Massachusetts, has introduced into the Legislature of that State the following Bill:

"An Act to prevent the abandonment of parents by children.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in General Court assembled, and by authority of the same, as follows:—

Section 1.—Any adult person a resident of this State, having a parent within this State, said parent being destitute of means of subsistence and unable either by reason of old age, infirmity or illness to support himself or herself, who is possessed of or able to earn means sufficient

to provide such parent with necessary shelter, food, care and clothing, and neglects or refuses so to do, shall upon conviction, be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and punished by imprisonment in jail or in a workhouse, at hard labor, for not more than one year, nor less than 3 months; provided, however, if after such conviction and before sentence such person shall appear before the Court in which such conviction shall have taken place and enter into bond, with good and sufficient surety, to be approved by said Court, to the Commonwealth in the penal sum of one thousand dollars, conditioned that he will furnish such parent with necessary and proper shelter, food, care and

clothing, the said Court shall suspend sentence therein.

In explaining the purport of his Bill the Senator, amongst other things said:—

"A great many people may at first sight think this enactment of the 5th Commandment into a statute something unnecessary, but I know to the contrary.

I was, when a member of the Boston Board of Aldermen, which acts as the Suffolk County Commissioners, obliged by statute to make a semi-annual tour of the public institutions of the city and county, to talk with the inmates and learn their wants. Our visits to the paupers developed a great many painful facts, but none more painful than the abandonment of old people by their children."

It sounds somewhat peculiar to hear a legislator talking of "making one of the Ten Commandments law"; but that is a phrase that must be accepted in the sense that the state of society requires that the civil government of the county should enforce the observance of a much disregarded law of God.

Not long ago we had occasion to point out the differences between the Anglo-Saxon system of precedent and the Latin (or French) system of principle. While the authority which we quoted held that the former was more sane and sure, and better calculated to establish a solid jurisprudence, indicated, to the best of our ability, how the latter was more positive, more reliable, less chaotic, and less open to false or whimsical interpretation. Here is a very good illustration of our contention. In the United States, as in England, the jurisprudence of the country is the outcome of precedents, and constantly has the law to be changed or amended in order to meet the requirements of unforeseen cases. In this Province, the French—or Latin—system obtains; it is based upon principles as old as Roman jurisprudence, and these are unchangeable; they remain ever the same landmarks to guide judges and legislators in the administration or fabrication of the civil law.

Taking this new Bill—the contents of which are not upon any American statute-book, nor within the legal experience of any of those learned in the law—we find our civil code, in a

## NOTE AND COMMENT.

The "True Witness" gave its readers, last week, a brief criticism of the New Catechism compiled by ministers of various Evangelical Churches; it is pleasant, if a little surprising, to find that to a great extent some of the Protestant Press is in accord with the appreciation which we published. For example, we find the New York Churchman, a Protestant Episcopal organ, observing:—

"Speaking generally the Catechism, though it is wholly silent of the 'filioque,' is Catholic in its theology and in the third division of the Apostles' Creed its definitions are inadequate rather than false. The definition of the Church, for instance, is vague, but we note that it is called a visible brotherhood, which has been supposed to be fundamentally contrary to the position of dissenters. We could not, however, regard their proof of a valid ministry as decisive at all. Any layman of zeal might well fulfil both the 'conversion of sinners and the edification of the body of Christ.' Indeed, we should have thought this same definition would have caused the Presbyterians some qualms. It is said that a Christian minister must be called of God and the Church; but we do not learn that there is any outward test of the truth of the call. The teaching on baptism is capable of a wholly Catholic interpretation, but it does not compel it; for what is signified by 'signify'? Is it 'symbolize,' or 'become a means to convey'? And so, time and again, verbal resemblances raise hopes of concord that a careful examination shows masked unspoken differences. Especially in the treatment of the second sacrament, we note a studied vagueness."

The "Standard," a Baptist organ of Chicago, while striving to defend the Catechism and to bring agreement out of a disagreement to which it must give rise, is forced to say:—

"To be sure, its brief definitions are capable of diverse explanations in the sense that various schools of theology may offer different courses of reasoning to reach these conclusions."

And it more emphatically explains later on in its review of the work that:—

"There is in the catechism no philosophy of the atonement; no elaborate definition of inspiration; no explicit statement as to the destiny of those who reject Christ in this life, except that sin, unless the sinner repents, 'must issue in death eternal.' But the truths which touch most closely the present life, the duty to

few words laying down the same principle and doing so in clear, unmistakable, unchangeable language.

Article 166, of the Civil Code of Lower Canada, enacts: "Children are bound to maintain their father, mother, and other ascendants, who are in want."

Article 168 says: The obligations which result from these provisions are reciprocal."

There is no circumlocution in the law. It is a plain statement of a general principle, that children are obliged to support their parents, when the latter are in want. It is for the Court, having the facts and circumstances before it, to decide in how far, in each special case, this general rule applies. The degree of indigence of the parents and the competence or means of the children must be considered. Moreover, our Code of Civil Procedure permits the indigent parent to proceed "in forma pauperis"—or without being obliged to disburse any money to set the whole machinery of the law in motion, and the officers of the Court, and all connected with the administration of justice are obliged to give their services gratis.

Nor is this a mere enactment brought into our Code by the jurists who compiled it. Rather is it a principle that can be traced back for centuries through all the ramifications of French law. Articles 205 and 207 of Code of Napoleon, contain the same clauses; Pothier, on obligations, (123), and the same, on marriage, (385-387), embodies these same principles, or this double principle: Maracade, (389-395), Merlin ("Aliments," 2d par. 2d chapter), and almost all the authorities treating the subject have invariably consecrated this same principle, which can be found enunciated in the Institutes of Justinian, (295, 297). Thus, we see, the law of our Province, based on principle, contains this clause, having taken it unchanged and intact from the very laws of the Romans, and from the various Codes, Ordinances, and Institutes that have since existed; and it is only at the close of the nineteenth century that a legislator, dealing with the Saxon system of precedent, has discovered that his country's laws are lacking in the expression of such an important principle.

serve God and acknowledge Christ, the privilege of the presence of the Holy Spirit and of prayer, are plainly taught. Even in treating of the constitution of the Church and the ordinances, or sacraments, though here some Baptist readers will begin to shake their heads, the statements are chiefly by defect—they are mostly true so far as they go."

To say the least, this is not a very enthusiastic reception from that important quarter. It appears to us that the ultimate end of the new Catechism will be either to cause unheard of controversies between the divers elements of Protestantism, or else to sink—after a few newspaper criticisms—into perpetual oblivion.

It is pleasant to notice such comments as the following on the manner in which Irishmen discharge their high functions, in positions of responsibility. The "Charlottetown Patriot," speaking of Lieut.-Governor Howland and his wife, whose term of office as Governor of Prince Edward Island has just expired, says:—

"We merely voice the sentiments expressed on every side regarding those who have so worthily fulfilled their high vocation when we aver that none could possibly have have adorned their exalted position more, or acted more to the satisfaction of the public, than the generous-hearted and patriot-spirited Lieut.-Governor Howland and his quietly charitable and untiring hospitable lady. May their future be one of unmingled happiness."

To which we heartily say Amen.

It strikes strange in the ear to hear it remarked that the Irish landlords are an unfortunate body, that their rents are the one bribe which every Irish statesman, liberal and conservative, has to offer for Irish popularity. They are like a ham on a sideboard, from which, when other viands fail, one can always cut a slice. Anyway, the political results of their land legislation are, small thanks from the tenants, who find themselves deprived of much that Mr. Morley offered, and dissatisfaction on the part of the landlords, who cry out in bitterness to save them from their friends. How different it might all have been in the past if some had saved the peasantry from the landlords! and now these long suffering landlords feel aggrieved over the local Government Act. One of the Irish judges, who is a strong Unionist, wittily described it some months ago,

as "a measure for the abolition of Irish gentlemen." It is abundantly evident by this time that, as a class, they will in future have little or no share in local administration. One of them here and there, through accidental circumstances, may be elected, but as a body, or in large numbers, it is evident that the people of the greater part of the country will not vote for them. Their fate seems to be "disestablished and disendowed" far more literally than the Church to which they belong."

## NOTES OF LOCAL INTEREST.

A most enjoyable concert was given on Thursday evening in St. Anthony's Parish Hall, for the benefit of the poor of the parish. A most select programme of vocal and instrumental music, which had been prepared under the able direction of Miss Donovan, organist of the Church, was rendered in a very creditable manner. M. J. F. Quinn, Q.C., M.P., whose power of oratory is well known, delivered a most eloquent address.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians will hold their grand annual concert on St. Patrick's night, in the Windsor Hall, and a large array of talent has been secured for that evening. The Hibernian Knights who under the command of Captain O'Keane, are to give a fancy drill exhibition, are putting in some hard practice. They will also lead the various divisions of the A. O. H. in the procession on St. Patrick's Day.

The official returns of the mortality department at the City Hall shows that during the past week there were in the city a total of 113 deaths, of which 101 were Roman Catholics, and 12 Protestants. The chief causes of death were typhoid two, measles 3, whooping cough, 1, infantine debility nineteen, consumption and like diseases forty-one, and gripe four.

During the month of January the Grand Council of Canada, C.M.B.A., initiated 59 new members. The reserve fund to the credit of the association to-day is \$85,746.

The parent Irish National Society of Montreal, St. Patrick's Society have decided to replace the customary concert by a dinner at the Windsor Hotel, for which a limited number of tickets will be issued. Preparations are now under way to make the event one of the most successful social and national functions ever held in this city.

His Grace Mgr. Bruchesi preached a most eloquent sermon at the Cathedral last Sunday, upon "Religious Orders."

Rev. Father Mignau, of Paris, France, delivered the first of his Lenten sermons at Notre Dame Church last Sunday, upon "The Man of Duty."

Thursday being the feast of St. Januarius, the relics of that Saint were exposed for veneration, at the St. James Cathedral. A large number of people venerated the relics throughout the day.

C. M. B. A., Branch 26.—The regular monthly meeting of Branch 26, Catholic Mutual Benefit Association, Grand Council of Canada, held in their hall, 92 St. Alexander street, on Monday night, was largely attended, and four new members were admitted. Matters of great importance were discussed.

The Branch has fixed upon the 2nd Sunday in March, for the date for members to attend their Easter duty in a body.

The Bill to incorporate the new Catholic High School, proposed at the present session of the Provincial Parliament by Dr. Guerin, has passed its third reading.

The Rev. Father McAllen, S.S., of St. Patrick's will preach a charity sermon at St. Ann's Church, to-morrow. The collection will be for the benefit of the poor of the parish.

St. Mary's Catholic Young Men's Society held a meeting on Thursday evening in their hall, which had been adjourned from Sunday. Some very important business was disposed of. Preparations were made to have the procession on St. Patrick's Day. Arrangements were also made for the annual picnic which is to be at Cornwall on May 24th. No effort will be spared to make it a success.

The forty hours devotion will commence in St. Patrick's Church on March 19th, the feast of St. Joseph.

St. James Choir.—The second annual concert of the choir of St. James Cathedral will take place at the Windsor Hall, on Thursday March 9, under the patronage of Mgr. Bruchesi, when the oratorio "Les Sept Paroles du Christ," by Th. Dubois will be presented.

Work on the roadway and sidewalk for vehicular and pedestrian traffic

over the Victoria Jubilee bridge is being rapidly pushed forward by the contractors in order to complete the structure by May 1. On the south side of the bridge the iron lattice work on the outer edge already extends to about the centre. The formal opening will take place with much ceremony on the 24th of May.

At the meeting Monday evening of the Gaelic Society of Montreal, which was held in their rooms 662½ Craig St., great progress was made in the study of the Irish language. A number of volumes so generously donated by Mr. M. J. F. Quinn, Q.C., M.P., had arrived from Ireland, and were distributed to the members. Everybody present seemed very desirous to learn the language of their native land; and aged men view with the younger ones in learning the rudiments. Several Highlanders were among those present, and they were quite at home among their Irish brothers. Final preparations were also made for the entertainment which takes place this evening in their rooms. To-day is the 128th anniversary of the birth of Robert Emmet, and Mr. M. J. F. Quinn will lecture upon the life and times of that celebrated martyr and patriot. Irish songs, dances and recitations will also be rendered during the evening. It is expected a large audience will be present.

At the meeting which was held on Thursday, 23rd February, at 21 St. Louis Square, for the purpose of organizing a ladies' class of the Gaelic Society, the following officers were elected:—

Miss Gertrude M. Stafford, pres.; Miss Theresa E. Martin, vice-pres.; Mrs. Thomas Harding, recording-sec.; Miss Rita O'Maherty, fin. sec.; Miss M. E. Wall, treas.

The credit of the large attendance and the interest manifested by those present, is due largely to the indefatigable efforts of Miss Stafford.

The convention of Irish National Societies, to make arrangements for the celebration of St. Patrick's Day, will take place on Monday evening, in St. Patrick's Hall, Alexander Street, at 8 p. m.

Rev. Father McDonald, of St. Gabriel's parish, preached an eloquent sermon at St. Mary's Church, on Sunday last. This talented young priest, is destined to take rank amongst the foremost preachers in the Irish parishes.

The regular fortnightly meeting of Division No. 1, A. O. H., was held in their hall, No. 5 Place d'Armes Sq., on Wednesday evening, Feb. 22nd, a large attendance of members being present. The following resolutions of condolence were unanimously adopted, in memory of our deceased brother, Edward Smith.

Whereas, It has pleased God in His infinite wisdom to call from our midst our worthy and beloved brother Edward Smith, on Sunday, Feb. 12th, 1899.

Whereas, By the death of our esteemed brother, Division No. 1, A. O. H., has lost one of its most beloved and respected members, and his family a most loving and devoted brother. Therefore, be it resolved. That while we bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, we none the less mourn the loss, of an endeared and worthy member, and earnestly pray to the Most High for the eternal repose of his soul, and sincerely condole with his family in this their sad bereavement.

Resolved, That the charter of our Division be draped in mourning for the period of thirty days, and that these resolutions be spread on the minutes of the meeting, that a copy of the same be transmitted to the family of the deceased, and to the "True Witness" for publication. John Ryan, secretary.

## New System of Glazing Ornamental Glass.

In church windows it is customary to put ornamental glass. To make and set this material, so that it will remain weatherproof, is a very difficult matter. The heavier the glass, the greater is the difficulty. Lead will not hold—it is too soft. Brass and copper are now being used with the weatherproofing made by means of cement. In temperate climates this is satisfactory, but in this city such a joint will not remain weathertight. It will hold together, but after a short time the cement cracks and the joint leaks. The new system, which meets all requirements perfectly, is a system of glazing in copper, without cement, in which the copper is set in place electrically, and makes a perfect joint. The sheet is rigid and the joint remains weatherproof. The Luxfer Prism Co., 1833 Notre Dame St., have found that this is the only system by which heavy glass like prisms can be kept in place and not leak. They tried all other known methods before securing the rights to use this process.

The wise know how to quit the world before the world quits them.