

# THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT  
No. 761, Craig Street, Montreal, Canada.  
ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION  
Country, \$1.00  
City, 1.50  
If not paid in advance, \$1.50 (Country) and \$2 (City) will be charged.  
Subscribers, Newfoundland, \$1.50 a year in advance.

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1891

## HAPPY NEW YEAR to all.

THE most gratifying news received for sometime by cable is the statement that His Holiness the Pope, on the twenty-sixth of the present month, in conversation with a number of his relatives, gave the most positive denial to the lying reports about his feebleness of health, and assured them that he had never felt better than at present. May God keep him so.

AN idea of the class of miscreants who are making war on the Pope in Italy may be had from the report of the recent outrage at Valencia, during the celebration of Midnight Mass on Christmas morning. No less than four bombs were exploded in the edifice, in rapid succession. The high altar was completely destroyed, a large portion of the wall fell on the worshippers, and many were bruised and maimed. Such are the deeds of those who claim that the Holy Father is a tyrant.

THERE is possibly some use in having a newspaper like the Daily Witness, because we are always sure to see in it the worst that certain uncharitable persons can say about Catholics and the Catholic Church. Into its columns, as into a common sewer, every fanatic can empty its vials of scurrility. It thus supplies a sort of journalistic safety-valve which enables these people to relieve feelings that would otherwise explode, perhaps, in a less harmful manner. In last Monday's issue we had a choice specimen of this sort of thing. A correspondent, signing himself "Saul," gives an account of a conversation which, he alleges, occurred between him and "a respectably dressed woman" at St. Patrick's Church, on the occasion of Father Dowd's funeral. The conversation, as given, bears unmistakable evidence of being an invention. No woman could have spoken as stated, not even were the story the correspondent relates true, there is no Catholic woman or man who would have used the words about indulgences that the writer puts into her mouth. Educated, kindly disposed Protestants, clergymen and laymen, attended the lamented Father Dowd's funeral, and some of them gave expression to sentiments honorable to their Christianity. It remained, however, for this ignorant, rabid and untruthful scribbler to fling dirty ink at the Catholic Church, because, probably, he was unable, after the style he was in the habit of practising in Ireland, of flinging a stone.

THE Christian charity that exists amongst the best classes in our fair city may be judged by the fact that on Christmas Day, in his sermon, the Rev. Doctor Norton, Rector of Christ Church Cathedral, the leading Protestant place of worship in this city, said, in speaking of the late Father Dowd:—

"We need never fear to be faithful to our principles, whatever they may be, so long as we remember that 'the greatest of these is love.' Controversies, and times of tension, between the diverse elements of our population, there must needs be, occasionally, for generations to come. Enormous is the advantage to the whole community, when God raises up in our midst able and good men, like the late parish priest of St. Patrick's, who know how to hold firmly their own convictions, while acting with large-hearted generosity and charity, in times of need, towards those whose religious convictions differ from their own. Well may the whole city mourn his loss. And yet, although he has gone to his reward, his influence is not lost, having made an indelible impression for good upon the complex life of Montreal."

And the Rev. Mr. Ellegood, who, as we said in our report of the funeral of the late Father Dowd, was a worker with that noble priest during the ship fever period, in his sermon on Sunday also paid a generous tribute to the memory of the deceased. After relating the events which led up to exodus from the famine-stricken shores of Ireland in the year 1847, the Canon spoke thus:—

"In 1843 I was junior curate of Christ Church. It was my duty to visit, day by day, those belonging to our own community, who were dying in large numbers of ship fever, typhoid and smallpox. Among the most devoted of those who were ministering to the dying might be seen the benevolent and intellectual face of the late Father Dowd. His characteristic assiduity in the performance of his sacred duties was the subject of remark at the time. Again he said: 'In the same year there existed in Griffithstown a very unpleasant feeling between some of the Protestants and those belonging to Father Dowd's faith. The late Father did much towards allaying this unhappy state of things and the result was harmony.' In closing, the speaker added: 'Re-

ing aware, as I was, of the good deeds of the reverend Father and the usefulness of his daily life, I, in common with all who knew him, was indeed stricken with sorrow when we heard of his serious illness; and the daily bulletins were watched with great anxiety, and when his death was announced the lamentation was both profound and general. It was felt that a good man had fallen.'"

## THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

Another year has been rolled into the abyss of the past, with its record of good and evil fixed imperishably in the history of the world, of nations and of individuals. Time out of mind the custom has been at this season to make homilies on the obvious sentiments which naturally arise in every heart on the dying year. Moralists have preached, poets have sung, in all ages and times, of the hour when the great bell strikes another hour in the day of time, whose every moment is the twilight of eternity to thousands of souls passing away under the dark, soundless shadow of the wings of the Angel of the Hereafter. This is the day to remove the yoke from the neck of labor and bow our heads in thankfulness that we have seen another year.

This year just passing away has impressed its moral, replete with awful warning, on every heart. Let each read it after the light it has set up for itself. The day that ushers in the new year has been observed as a festival from the most ancient times of which we have any record. In all heathen religions it was sacred to "the earth," under various designations, Ops, Cybele, Magna Mater, Thyia, Tellus, Proserpine and even Juno and Minerva, and the worship which was paid to these several deities was offered merely to one and the same person, namely, the Earth idealized. The word *Opus*, because the earth will only yield its abundance to labor.

With the rise of Christianity the worship of material things passed away. Evil spirits were driven from their shrines. The cracles were silenced, and the church has appropriately dedicated the first day of the new year to the faith of which we became members by the sacrament of baptism. In the calendar it is the Feast of the Circumcision of our Lord, who was thus made to comply with the old law, which was the first legal observance required by Almighty God of the descendants of Abraham. It was a sacrament of initiation in the service of God and a promise and engagement to believe and act as He had revealed and directed. The law of circumcision continued in force until the death of Christ, and our Saviour having been born under the law it became Him who came to teach mankind obedience to the law of God to fulfill all justice and to submit to it. Therefore He was circumcised that He might redeem them that were under the law by freeing them from the servitude of it, and that those who were in the condition of servants before might be set at liberty and receive adoption in baptism, which, by Christ's institution, succeeded to circumcision.

We may thus understand why New Year's Day has always been a festival of joy among Christian people. Apart from its sacred associations, it has a social aspect, probably derived from the greetings which passed between the early Christians in times of persecution when they met each other in their ordinary avocations. This custom, as we all know, has survived to the present day. Charles Lamb in his quaint way has alluded to "that turncoat bell, which just now mournfully chimed the obsequies of the year departed, with changed notes lustily rings in a successor." But we must love that bell, for a later poet has indicated the true instinct of the chiming:—

"Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow;  
The year is going, let him go,  
Ring out the false, ring in the true."

The custom of bestowing New Year's gifts is of very ancient date. Its origin is ascribed to Romulus, when it was usual to give figs and dates, these presents generally coming from clients to patrons accompanied with a piece of money, which latter was devoted to religious purposes. Emperors of Rome did not disdain these gifts until Claudius prohibited them; nevertheless, some Christian emperors did receive them. At length they were condemned by councils of the church on account of the Pagan ceremonies that attended them. Among the Saxons the festival of the New Year was observed with more than ordinary jollity feasting and carousing, and by the sending of New Year's gifts. In after times the Kings of England perpetuated the custom, and it is recorded that Henry III. extorted New Year's gifts. The eighth Henry did something of the same kind, and Latimer, it is said, seized the occasion to give the King a hint. The usual present was a purse of gold, but Latimer gave him a New Testament with a leaf doubled down at Hebrews XIII, 4th verse. Queen Elizabeth made a pretty good thing out of these gifts, for it is recorded that all the spiritual lords and temporal peers, the members of her household, down to the distaff, gave Her Majesty a present on New Year's Day. The stern and gloomy Buchanan, according to the custom of that time of sending gifts of poetry to persons of high station, sent some verses

to Mary Queen of Scots, too cruel even at this distance of time to bear quotation. The term "pin money" had its origin in the custom of making New Year's presents. Down to the end of the fifteenth century the ladies used wooden skewers, but about that time pins were introduced, and made very acceptable New Year's gifts. Pins in time became common, and a composition in money was given instead.

There was an old superstition concerning the weather which has come down to us according to the custom of putting wise sayings into rhyme:—

"If New Year's eve night wind blow South,  
It betokeneth a warm and growth;  
If West, much Milk, and fish in the sea;  
If North, much cold and storms there will be;  
If East, the trees will bear much fruit,  
If North-East, see it man and brute."

In the Highlands of Scotland there were many superstitious observances connected with the last night of the Old Year, such as the "Smuchdan," or fumigation of dwellings by juniper. Perhaps it is from this word that Canadians derive the word "smudge," for a smoky fire to keep off mosquitoes in summer time. All countries have customs peculiar to New Year's Day, but in Canada and the United States the habit of making calls was down to a very recent period not the farthest removed from barbarism. The ladies stay at home to meet callers, and it is their ambition to be able to say they had a very large number, while the gentlemen, on the other hand, are equally anxious to call at as many places as possible. Wine and liquor is given by the ladies on New Year's Day, and it is not an infrequent thing to see a crowd of tipsy callers making their final visits, when some poor lady, tired to death after a weary day of hand-shaking and empty compliments, has to endure the presence of a lot of men whom, perhaps, she scarcely remembers ever having seen before, and may never see again. It is, however, a gratifying sign of the times, that this custom in its more offensive aspect is dying out, and a better sense of the duties of the occasion obtaining among both sexes.

## 1891.

We are now fairly entered into the last decade of the nineteenth century—a century more fruitful in material progress than any which preceded it. The year which has passed away, the first in the decade, was more remarkable from a broad view for its transitional character than for its culminations. The powers of Europe remain in the same relative positions they occupied at its beginning, except that the great war, which everybody expected would occur before now, seems further off than ever. It must, however, be conceded that the present peaceful outlook is owing more to the operation of natural causes than to any intention on the part of those who are regarded as the disturbers of European peace. Chief among these causes was the failure of the crops throughout Europe. Russia, who at the beginning of the year threatened to let loose the dogs of war, has been paralyzed by a famine more extensive and exhaustive than any similar misfortune known in modern times. This tremendous affliction and the Triple Alliance have strengthened the influences which make for peace and given the world a further respite from greater afflictions still anticipated as inevitable. The only war of any consequence was that waged in Chili, and which ended in the defeat and death of Balmaceda. The revolution in Brazil was accomplished without bloodshed, although that country has not enjoyed either tranquility or good government since the forced abdication of Dom Pedro.

Great Britain has had its usual little wars in Asia and Africa, out of which again as usual, it did not come with very much credit. The story of the Manipur affair shows that there was treachery on both sides, needless bloodshed and a conclusion in cruelty quite in keeping with the character of the Viceroy, who improved on his methods in Ireland to the full extent of his power by making the people of Manipur acquainted with that great engine of British civilization—the gallows, for daring to defend their liberties.

In the far east, China has been forced by the encroachments of foreign powers into a state of revolution, which is believed by some who profess a knowledge of the affairs of that empire to be the commencement of great changes. The massacre of missionaries by mobs, which seems to have had official countenance, has led to a demand on the Emperor's government for indemnification and assurances of better observance of treaties. So far, however, but little progress appears to have been made in either direction.

In Ireland, the cause of Home Rule, though not obscured, has been injured by the division in the ranks of the Nationalist party. The fall and death of Mr. Parnell is one of the saddest chapters in Irish history since the movement began for repeal of the union. The coercionist government of Lord Salisbury has clung to office with the tenacity of men who know that an appeal to the people would mean their expulsion. But Mr. Gladstone

and the Liberal party of England still keep the banner of Home Rule in the forefront of the struggle, and their almost uniform success in the by-elections is a good augury of their coming triumph in the general elections.

In the United States nothing of very great national importance has occurred. The farmers have been blessed with a most abundant harvest, and the resulting prosperity has silenced the discontent which was so marked a feature in American industrial life a year ago. Politically there has been but little change. The leading ideas on which the Democrats appeal for support to the masses have apparently remained in the ascendant since the great overturn of November, 1890, and will probably render the approaching Presidential contest close and exciting.

In Canada we have enjoyed a highly prosperous year, owing mainly to the good harvest, though trade has not been as flourishing in some respects as in the year preceding. The Dominion general election, the death of Sir John Macdonald, the long session of Parliament with its painful revelations, were events that have had an apparent tendency to produce changes that, as yet, can be hardly foreseen or estimated. The dismissal of Mr. Mercier after the Royal Commission investigation is a matter of such recent occurrence that it cannot be said to have yet come within so brief a historical review as this is intended to be.

The reference of the Manitoba School question to the highest court for judicial decision is a decided triumph over an intolerant spirit which, for a short period, held sway in the Prairie Province.

Many notable personages passed over to the great majority during the year. Among the more prominent were:—

Mgr. Labelle, the Apostle of Colonization;  
George Bancroft, American historian;  
Sir John Macdonald, Premier of Canada;  
Charles Stewart Parnell;  
Dom Pedro, ex-Emperor of Brazil;  
Dr. Windthorst, leader of German Catholics;  
Ferdinand Lecomte, Vice-General, Toronto;  
Hon. W. H. Smith, leader of British House of Commons;  
Duke of Devonshire;  
Bishop Wadhams, of Ogdensburg, N.Y.;  
Sister Theresa, Superioress of Longmeadow Asylum;  
Lord Lytton;  
Bishop McIntyre, of Charleston, S.C.;  
Senator Haythorne of P.E.I.;  
Sir Edward Kenny of Halifax;  
Senator Leonard of London, Ont.;  
John Boyle O'Reilly;  
Sir A. A. Dorian, Chief Justice;  
L. H. Massie, M.P.;  
Dr. Eagan, Bishop of Waterford;  
President Balmaceda of Chili;  
General Boulanger;  
Lord Granville;  
The King of Holland;  
Senator Odell of Halifax;  
Dr. G. de Lubinowicz, Harvard;  
Sir John Pope Hennessy;  
King Charles of Wurtemberg;  
Mgr. Paston, Vice-General, New York;  
Rev. Father Dowd;  
A. B. Doost, M.P., Two Mountains.

## THE AMERICAN IDEA.

Not long ago Goldwin Smith delivered a lecture in Toronto on "Anglo-American," which has been replied to by Colonel George T. Denison. In these lectures the observer of contemporary thought may find interesting subjects for study. The professor advocated the political union of Canada and the United States with his usual ability, and pointed out the folly and wickedness of encouraging a spirit of hostility towards the neighboring Republic. He also dwelt on the inhumanity of war, its fundamental antagonism to the principles of American civilization, and, more than all, to the principles of Christianity. One may not agree with all the arguments used and conclusions arrived at by the professor, but it is only fair to recognize the ability with which he presented them, as well as their applicability to certain phases of our political and commercial affairs. The mistake he made, as we take it, was in regarding a transitory state as a permanent tendency. A change of government in either country may any day so alter the relations now existing as to destroy the force of many of his arguments. No one, we imagine, whose opinion is worth considering, contemplates the event of war between the Dominion and the United States, as either possible or probable, and Mr. Smith is certainly right in deprecating the encouragement of the "Jingo" spirit among Canadians. The whole tendency of civilization on this continent is in the direction of peaceful industrial development, and among the great mass of people in both countries the military profession is regarded as little better than a waste of time and human energy, excusable perhaps in a certain class of young men of unsettled temperament, in whom a love of adventure renders habits of labor and industry distasteful. But as the country becomes settled, and the civil law estab-

lished supreme in all its parts, the necessity for the military arm grows more and more remote. The generations, as they rise, are less and less familiar with "the ear-piercing life and spirit-stirring drum." The idea of succeeding in life, of making money, has perhaps done more in these days than any other motive to confirm the instincts of civil law, and render the idea of war except as a last resort in defence of those institutions, extremely distasteful, as it is fundamentally obnoxious to the ideal of citizenship.

We may delight in recalling the heroic achievements of our ancestors, and glory in the record of the battles they won, but we feel that a force now prevails in the civilized world, more especially in America, which is stronger for the settlement of international disputes, on a basis of common sense and mutual compromise, than any brute force of armies that could be brought into the field.

It must be admitted, however, that so long as a powerful semi-barbarous nation like Russia, bent upon conquest, threatens the peace of the world, the military principle must be maintained. Canada, as a part of the British Empire, is thus concerned, and it is easy to imagine that, in the event of a war with Russia, complications might arise with the United States. The spirit of hostility towards England in the United States would have to be reckoned with. But this should only serve to indicate the wisdom of adopting a policy in this country which would disarm that hostility, so that, in case of war, Canada would be a source of strength and not of weakness to the Empire. As matters stand, the interests of our people are identical in all material aspects with those of the people of the United States. There is no reason which should weigh in the mind of a statesman why the most cordial understanding should not prevail between the two countries. Canadians should be not less willing to accept the Monroe doctrine than their republican neighbors, because it affords a guarantee of non-interference by non-American powers in the affairs of this continent, and we should be glad, as Great Britain is willing, that we should enjoy the advantages it would confer. No argument is needed to demonstrate its usefulness to Great Britain, while the fact that its acceptance by our people would advance the unity of the English-speaking peoples of the world, leaves nothing to be desired by the most ultra nationalist.

This is not annexation or "voiled treason." It is common sense. The Dominion and the Republic must, as a study of their history and present condition will show, continue on the lines of development closely analogous, although separate. The United States is fast rising up; the flood of population is rising and must in a few decades begin to overflow. Even now, farming land is getting scarce in what was once considered the limitless West. When that overflow begins, the vast territories of the Dominion will offer the only available land for settlement. Then will begin the great Canadian boom, and the tide which has been flowing westward, turned back by the waters of the Pacific, will sweep into the North-West. This result is inevitable, and will be in full activity before the close of the century. Whether an imaginary line extending for two thousand miles across a prairie will be respected as a barrier sufficiently strong to permanently separate kindred people, thickly settled on either side of it, is hardly probable. Till that time comes, we may continue our present system, but any one can see that the day is not far off when it must be abandoned. Political exigencies on both sides of the line will prevail for the present, but the future will make its own conditions, and it may be safely left to do so.

## HARTINGTON.

The elevation of the Marquis of Hartington to the House of Lords, as Duke of Devonshire, in succession to his father, will be a loss to the Coercionist Government in the Commons. The Unionist faction which he has led, has been steadily dwindling in number and influence since the revolt against Mr. Gladstone and Home Rule, and will cease to exist as a factor in politics after the coming general elections.

Lord Hartington was one of those frequent characters in British politics who have had greatness thrust upon them. The old Whig families always have their representatives in the House of Commons, usually heirs to peerages when such actions are not too vicious and dissipated, and they have to be very bad to be considered unfit for the honor.

In the House of Lords, the new duke will probably follow recent precedents and drop quietly into the Tory fold. Whiggery as a form of political faith is fast passing away. Its usefulness really departed with the passage of the Reform Bill. The split in the Liberal party on the question of Home Rule exercised its ghost from the Liberal party and laid it at rest, so far as such a ghost may rest, in the limbo of Toryism. Nor can there be the faintest shadow of regret that it is so. In the Liberal party, especially

since Mr. Gladstone's declaration of his policy of "Justice to Ireland," the Whig element has been a drag and a hindrance. In power it gobbled all the best and most lucrative posts as its own by-privilege right, in opposition it was sulky, intractable and unreliable. For years its sympathies were more with the Tories than with the Liberals, while its hereditary hatred of everything savoring of Catholicism nullified it for practical purposes of government in an age of generous religious toleration. The Liberal party will, therefore, be stronger without men of the Hartington stamp, as an open enemy is less dangerous than an insincere friend.

Possessed of abilities that his greatest admirer could not rate above mediocrity, of a cold, cynical, yet sensual temperament, he was nevertheless not only tolerated, but actually maintained a position of respectability and leadership, because of his family and the territorial interests he represented. In the House of Lords he will sink to his proper level, and, fortunately for the nation, he has no son to follow his footsteps in the House of Commons. Although as great a sinner against social virtue as Parnell was alleged to be, he suffered nothing in public estimation either by the practice or exposure of his vices. Charity would allow him to pass into oblivion without mention, did not justice point to the pillory for his crimes against Ireland. Like Castlereagh, he helped

"To fasten fetters, long already fixed,  
And offer poison, long already mixed."

The mantle of his Unionist leadership will fall, it is said, on the shoulders of Chamberlain, who will have an easy task in counting his followers in the next parliament, and who is pretty certain to experience the usual fate of renegades when the popular tide will have passed over the constituencies.

A century of coercion is drawing to a close. It may be said to have begun under the auspices of a Pitt and sinks to its declension on crutches supplied by the Birmingham Radical. The names of Pitt and Chamberlain fittingly indicate the beginning and the end of the accursed system.

## THE SOUTHERN WAR CLOUD.

The government of the United States is quickly massing a fleet of war vessels in Chilean waters, and getting ready an army of ten thousand men, with a view of teaching the pugnacious Chilians a lesson, should they not apologize and make reparation for the outrage on American sailors at Valparaiso. President Harrison and his advisers are loath to proceed to the extremity of declaring war against the sister republic, but it is felt that failure to enforce the demand for reparation would place the United States in a humiliating position, lower the prestige of their flag and render the lives and property of Americans in South America unsafe and precarious. The Chilians, however, are not a bit dismayed by the threat of hostilities. There appears to be a dogged determination among them not to abate a jot in the arrogant attitude they have assumed, or do anything that could be construed as a back-down. Such is the attitude of the people in the cities, though it is said that President Montt is not unwilling to make an honorable compromise. But in Chili popular passion is more likely to sway the government than diplomatic considerations. The Chilians are a vain, self-glorifying people, highly elated over their military successes, and being of Spanish descent, touched with a dash of Indian, they are not naturally disposed to listen to moderate or cautious counsels.

It must not be supposed, however, that a war with Chili would be a small affair and ended in a few months. General Schofield does not fall into the mistake of supposing this is going to be a military promenade. The war with Peru and the late civil war have accustomed the Chilians to active field operations. They will be fighting on their own ground, with every part of which they are well acquainted. They have a navy as powerful as that of the United States, manned by as good sailors and as determined fighters as there are in the world. Their cities are strongly fortified, and their national credit first rate in the money markets of Europe. War would therefore be a serious alternative for the United States. No doubt the bigger nation would triumph in the long run, but not before the fire-eating Chilians would have inflicted heavy damages, and quite possibly made their presence felt along the defenceless coasts of the United States.

These facts and considerations suggest that unless the Washington government can strike a sudden, overwhelming blow, sufficient to paralyze the Chilians at once, hostilities are likely to be prolonged, bloody and exasperating. War between the two republics is anything but a pleasant possibility to contemplate. Besides being a complete reversal of the principle Mr. Blaine has endeavored to establish in his Pan-American negotiations, it would give the armed nations of Europe a cause for sneers at America, and possibly lead to still graver international complications. It is there-