

The True Witness and Catholic Chronicle.

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EPISCOPAL APPROBATION.

If the English Speaking Catholics of Montreal and of this Province consulted their best interests, they would soon make of the TRUE WITNESS one of the most prosperous and powerful Catholic papers in this country. I heartily bless those who encourage this excellent work.

PAUL, Archbishop of Montreal.

SATURDAY.....SEPTEMBER 29, 1900.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

SACRED STATUARY.—The Rev. Abbe Richard, a member of the Paris clergy, has written a most important and critical study of the great Exhibition. From its pages "La Semaine Religieuse" has taken some very telling extracts, notably one on the subject of statues and above all religious statuary. As some of the learned Abbe's comments, while severe, are very exact and applicable even in our own country, we translate a few passages for the benefit of our readers. Amongst other things Abbe Richard says:—

"Nearly everywhere in the exhibition we meet with religious objects. But as one cannot take them all in at the same time, we must confine our remarks to the statuary and present the readers with some reflections suggested by a visit to class 66, wherein our modern fabricators of religious statues have exhibited their wares. The first impression that we experience, on going in, is an impression of 'having seen' * * * I wish simply to say that the religious statuary is represented at the exhibition by ordinary articles.

"They could not do better, doubtless, and this is what afflicts us. If we are proud of being Frenchmen when we gaze upon 'the column,' we are a little ashamed of being of the Church, as was formerly the saying, when we contemplate those sad specimens of a truly inferior art. Oh! those statues, ever the same! Those frozen attitudes! Those Sacred Hearts, those Virgins, those Saint Anthonies of Padua, that have all a family resemblance; insignificance! On looking upon them, one is reminded, in spite of oneself, of those wax figures in a hair-dresser's window. Is it not really vexing, that the religious statuary—that which is sold, that succeeds, that peoples our churches, not only in the villages, but even in Paris—should be reduced to such mediocrity, to such a platitude? I know well that it is a matter of commercial articles, and not of real works of art, and that, in consequence, there is need of less exactness. But still, is it too much to ask that a saint be as well and properly represented as a poet, a musician, or any political person? * * * Still we set up these poor specimens in our churches, often on either side of an altar of actual value. But I find it is to the purchasers that I am now referring, and as I don't wish to get into hot water with every one, I would do better to stop."

There is more truth than poetry in these remarks; and far more truthful are his comments upon the coloring of statues. The Abbe continues:—

"What can we say about that mania for exaggerated coloring which has become a specialty with our statue-makers, and of which no person envies them the possession, but which all people of taste deplore? Why be stubborn in regard to this crying vulgarity? For my part I prefer a statue without any coloring, with the honest simplicity of its lines and its relief. But if color is to be used, let it be done with discretion and discernment. Let some care be taken to color as not to

daub. A colored statue should not be touched over by a house or wagon painter." I repeat again—because of the reality of the evil and the simplicity of the remedy—that such vulgarities, such grotesqueness in execution are to be found in religious articles."

We will here close our quotations, although there are still more interesting passages than the foregoing in the article. We have cited enough to suggest many an editorial for our Catholic contemporaries. We hope, indeed, that Abbe Richard's heroic effort to improve the statuary for our churches will meet with the successful results it deserves.

IMPORTANT MEETING.—The monthly meeting of St. Patrick's Society, which is to be held on Monday evening next, in St. Patrick's Hall, Alexander street, promises to be one of unusual interest, as a series of important amendments to the by-laws will be discussed.

THE PAPACY.—The speech on the Roman question, delivered by Dr. Porsch, a member of the Reichstag and the Landtag, at the German Catholic Congress, recently held at Rome, was forcible and impressive. God had, he said, established the Papacy for a sacred bond of unity between peoples. It was not an arrangement which depended merely on the interests of the Italian State; the Pope belonged to the whole world; and whoever assailed and injured the Pope, injured and assailed the Catholics of Christendom (applause). Rome was not only the capital of a modern State, but it was the Eternal City reflecting the splendor of two thousand years' Christianity. It was "Roma intangible," the unconquerable city of the Popes (applause).

THE GLASGOW SLUMS.—Dr. Colvin, of Glasgow, in summing up the conclusions he formed upon the cases of bubonic plague in his article in the "Lancet," paints a vivid picture of life in one room which is very common in the slums of Glasgow. He says: "I speak of five years' experience from morning till night, and sometimes from night till morning, in and out of narrow, and often filthy, entrances, up and down dimly-lit stairs, and through dark and tortuous jobbies into low-roofed, odoriferous, and often pestiferous single apartments, where you may find six or even eight individuals of both sexes eating and sleeping and washing and dressing within the four walls of one room. Why send missionaries and money out of the country to civilize the heathen when there is need of both at home?" An exchange in commenting upon this statement, says: "What Dr. Colvin wishes to point out is that the Corporation should demolish all these single apartments and build cheap dwellings for the poor. They have already done a good deal in that way, but there is still much more to be done."

THE OLD TONGUE.—The Irish "American" gives this important bit of news:—The Irish language movement has received another and an important endorsement. The Catholic Hierarchy of Ireland are about to

use a pastoral address to the Irish people; and we now learn that it is to be published both in English and in Irish. The Prelates composing the National Synod, also,—on the suggestion of Cardinal Logue,—favored a proposition for the establishment of a Catholic weekly journal,—on a strictly non-political basis. These are important matters,—and not the least momentous,—resulting from the deliberations of the Hierarchy,—the only representative body endowed with National power to which the Irish people, at present, can look, to achieve any advancement in their social condition.

A COLD WAVE.—A report came from Edmonton on Monday last that a very heavy snowstorm had occurred there on Sunday night. The snow had fallen all night. The report states that in many places the snow is several feet deep. The same report says: Indications are that the cold wave is coming east.

RITUALISM IN POLITICS.—Judging by the tone of articles in the English newspapers across the pond, the religious squabbles are to be fought out on the platform in the forthcoming general election. The Low Churchmen are resolved to secure a "Protestant Party" in the House of Commons, and so obtain Government help to rout their Ritualist enemies.

A SAD END.—Another striking example of the result of misappropriating trust funds is shown in the case of J. N. Fulton, who was sentenced on Wednesday last in this city.

Mr. Justice Oumet in pronouncing sentence, said: "Fulton, you have been convicted of stealing some \$12,000 from Mrs. Coristine, which money came into your possession while you were acting as her agent. You have had every latitude for your defence, and you have been able to defend. Twelve jurors have declared you guilty, and the court, knowing the evidence, does not doubt the justice of the verdict. No doubt you are a very clever fellow, but you must not use your cleverness to the detriment of others. You must not use your money to be used for them alone. Agents must take warning that they must be able at any time to give a full account to those who entrust money to them. They must not use it for their own purposes and depend on the future to make it up. I am sorry you could not give a satisfactory explanation when you were in the box. I have received a petition from citizens who say that up to now you have enjoyed a good reputation. I would have been more impressed had these persons been called to give evidence under oath. I am obliged to be apparently severe, but the sentence of the court is that you be taken to the penitentiary and be detained there for the period of five years."

THE CHINESE SITUATION.

There seems to be a little light upon the dark cloud of uncertainty that overhangs the Chinese situation. Not that the world is any more certain as to the results that will close this red page of modern history, but there is something definite being done by some of the allies. The Americans are withdrawing from China, leaving only sufficient troops to take care of the legation at Peking. The Russians seem inclined to play a high hand and to dictate to other powers. However, Germany—with Field-marshal Waldersee as commander-in-chief of the allied troops—wants to drive the Chinese to the wall—not the great wall of China, but that figurative wall that is often more to be dreaded than one of stone. The note which Germany has sent to the Powers and the ultimatum to the Chinese Government, indicate a desire for war. It is not surprising that the surrender of persons most responsible for all the political disorders in China should be demanded, but it would appear as if Germany felt inclined to dictate the terms of peace or else to have the honor (if honor it be) of declaring a regular war against China. Great Britain does not evidently care to take any serious steps in the matter, rather preferring to leave to others the regulating of the Chinese. Possibly the reason is that she has "her hands full" elsewhere. At all events the situation is little changed, beyond the fact that the Celestial Empire—vast as it is in territory and numerous in population—is daily drawing nearer to a regular break-up; and the Bear, the Lion, the Eagle—in fact all the Eagles—seem to hover, or prowl (as the case may be) about the expected prey.

In glancing over the files of the papers published in 1870, we are astonished to find how similar are the deeds of that year in China with those of the present. While France and Russia were in that terrible death-grapple over Alsace and Lorraine, while Napoleon III. and Von Moltke were conspicuous, as fixed planets, before the gaze of civilization, while Bismarck was still holding out in Metz, and while Prussian regiments were pitching their tents

along the Seine, out in China, at Tien Tsin, the French and English inhabitants were being massacred by the furious and semi-savage sons of the Celestial Empire. France only awaited the close of the war with Prussia to send troops to aid England in subduing the Chinese. National representatives, missionaries—male and female—and French and British subjects in general were put to the sword, or tortured to death, from Peking to the coast. If we go back to 1858, we find almost similar scenes enacted. The Boxer rising of 1900 is but a repetition of history; and we fear that the same history will be again repeated periodically, until such time as China is brought under the beneficent influence of Christianity.

VOLTAIRE'S HERITAGE.

Admirers of Voltaire's perverted genius attempt to defend the moral character of the man, by pretending that the stories related regarding his evil life are merely inventions of an ecclesiastical nature launched for the purpose of discrediting the author of so many important works. If it be true that the "child is father to the man," certainly Voltaire's youth was an index to his maturer years—impious and immoral. These two words characterize his life to perfection. As to his impiety we need no other proof than his works; but his immorality might, at this distance, be questioned—we mean the fact that he led a bad life in the worst sense of the term. However, truth always comes to the surface, no matter how strongly it may be anchored to the button of Time's increasing flood.

The registration archives of Paris have recently given up the "last will and testament" of Voltaire's father. In it is the statement "that for good and sufficient reasons," Voltaire, the son, could not inherit; all his property should go to the children of his brother and of his sister. These are the exact words of the will:—

"If it should happen, however, that my said son, Voltaire, have fully reached the age of thirty-five years, should adopt a line of well-regulated conduct, and such as I would wish to have him display, in such case, as I only make the said substitution under a justifiable apprehension that he would squander the little that I leave, and then fall into ruin, etc., etc."

It is evident, from this paragraph, that the father knew his son pretty well, and had formed a fair estimate of his character. Voltaire was about twenty-five years of age when this will was made by his father, so he must have been leading, even then, a life calculated to bring him to an evil end. His great talents in no way excuse his evil inclinations, or his immoral conduct. On the contrary, they make him far more guilty, since he was bad with a full knowledge of the enormity of his badness.

A FENIAN SCARE.

Special correspondents from Europe and senders of special cable despatches to the American press must be laboring under the impression that the people on this side of the Atlantic are the most gullible in the world. When confused and contradictory news from China, or elsewhere, is lacking, they generally fall back on the Pope and his health. They have the Holy Father sick, sometimes dead, often dying, and most frequently taking fainting spells. When the Pope's health news becomes monotonous they have a fruitful source of news in the Fenians. The most recent attempt at a Fenian scare is in the form of a despatch to the effect that Mr. P. O'Brien, M.P., and Miss Maude Gonne have delegated an Irishman, who led some Boer contingents in the Transvaal, to visit America for the two-fold purpose of securing arms and ammunition, as well as robust Irish volunteers—men fit to train others in the discipline of military affairs—and to forward both arms and men to Ireland to prepare for a revolution that, it is claimed, is about to take place. The Fenians, of course, are at the bottom of it all.

Very much like the Jesuits—those mysterious and wonderful men—who, according to some non-Catholics, have a voice, or a hand in every imaginable movement; the Fenians are the supposed organizers of every political plot affecting Great Britain. We do not doubt that the Fenians would be glad to see England beaten and Ireland free; but it must be remembered that there are some wise men amongst those same Fenians; and wise men are not always inclined to do foolish things. We remember recently reading a very pertinent remark of James Stephens, late Head Centre of that body. When asked what he believed should be done under certain circumstances, Stephens simply replied: "Be prudent." His long years of imprisonment, and of exile, with all the political experience that he must have

gleaned, taught him to be prudent. It would be well—apart from the phantom scare of the Fenians—if our people would take the old Head Centre's advice; it would certainly prove of great benefit to Ireland and her cause. But we think that it is rather late in the day to try to frighten any one with the Fenian scare. Let the Fenians alone, and they will let others alone.

JUSTIN MCCARTHY'S RETIREMENT.

It has been rumored that Mr. Justin McCarthy, the Irish novelist and historian, member of Parliament for North Longford, and once leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party, purposes retiring from public life. Ill-health is the cause assigned for the voluntary disappearing of one of Ireland's foremost leaders; and one of the grandest figures upon the Imperial political stage that our century has known. Much as we, in common with all friends of Ireland and her cause, would regret the retirement of Mr. McCarthy, still we cannot deceive ourselves as to the fact that age, increasing responsibilities and constant work have lately been marking Mr. McCarthy in a most significant manner. At his age, and with an active and enthusiastic nature such as his, the nightly vigils of the House of Commons cannot but prove ruinous to physical and mental powers. Despite all this we still hope that it is only a rumor and an unfounded one. Later on we will be in a position to refer more fully to this subject; for the present we will reproduce a short sketch of Mr. McCarthy's career, taken from the columns of a contemporary:—

"Justin McCarthy is Ireland's literary man, and one of the best novelists in England, too. He began life in the capacity of a reporter in the gallery of the House of Commons, and often afterward sat in the House as a member. He was for a long time the editor of the 'Morning Star,' a position he resigned to make a tour of the United States in 1868. For nearly three years he travelled in America, and his letters to his paper were delightfully honest. Mr. McCarthy has written some of the most pleasant books in print, and they have been sold by the hundred thousand in Great Britain and Ireland and the United States. He is the best novelist that Ireland has produced since it produced the author of 'Charles O'Malley' and the author of 'Rory O'Moore.' But Mr. McCarthy's most important work, and the one by which he will live longest is 'A History of Our Own Times,' a chronicle of what happened in the three countries of the United Kingdom from the accession of Queen Victoria down to the late jubilee celebration of that monarch. He has also published a 'History of the Four Georges,' and it is upon these works that he bases his claim to the state of historian. Other works of his touching history are 'The Epoch of Reform,' 'Life of Sir Robert Peel,' and 'Prime Ministers of Victoria.' Mr. McCarthy has been somewhat prominent as a member of Parliament, in which he sat for Longford, Ireland. Mr. McCarthy has produced about seventeen novels."

FRANCE AND CHINA.

Never, perhaps, in the history of France did a Government make such a mistake as the one of which the present administrators have been guilty in connection with the supreme command of the allied troops in China. If it be true, as Claude Baran affirms in the "Gaulois," the Government of France has lost a magnificent opportunity from a national, as well as an international, standpoint, simply because the war department has a nightmare dread of militarism—of such spasmodic outbursts of hero worship, like the Boulangerism of a few years ago. Here is what M. Baran writes:—

"The German minister at Peking had been assassinated, the members of the foreign legations were believed to have been murdered. In Europe and in America, in haste preparations were made to send troops to China, without knowing, as yet, by what means such troops would be collected, and in virtue of what superior regulation they would operate."

At that moment Emperor William II. through his 'charge d'affaires' at Paris—Prime Minister being then absent on leave—intimated to the French Government that if France would appoint General de Negrier to command her expedition to China, she would accept that officer as commander-in-chief of their armies. This sensational communication was deliberated upon in the council of ministers under the presidency of Mr. Loubet, and, after a stormy discussion, the Government decided to decide the German Emperor's offer."

avoid the imaginary dangers of a French militarism, fall into the plan of creating a German militarism."

"Of all the responsibilities that this Republican ministry will have to answer for in history, most certainly, this one will prove the heaviest, and will mark that Government with an ineffaceable stigma."

HERMINE de ST. OURS.

Since our last issue, there has been laid beneath the beautiful village church at St. Ours, where many of her kin are sleeping, all that was mortal of Hermine Josephine de St. Ours, last bearer of a name ennobled in France, and honored in Canada from its earliest occupation. It is the extinction of what may almost be styled a dynast in seigniorial life. The family de St. Ours was originally a military one—"excellent and brave," as history says—and wielded the sword with prowess. More than once its services were recognized both in Europe and in Canada. While true to the Fleur de Lis of the Bourbons so long as it was upheld on this portion of the continent, under the newer regime the British Crown had no truer defenders.

But the influence wielded in the field and in the legislature was less potent than was the power exercised over the feelings and affections of the people. Placed by Royal favor seigneur of large domains, the family early recognized that the only power to have and to enjoy is that begotten of the love of the peasant, tenant, neighbor, in return for constant interest in their welfare. Devotion to the poor was unremitting; and, to be effective, the family practised frugality in their lives that the poor might be fed and clothed. When these required food or clothing or medicine, old linen for bandages, ointment for wounds, sedatives to tranquillize and soothe, advice or money—it was to Miss de St. Ours the appeal was made. She supplied what was needed with judgment and discrimination, and always with kindness. The winters are cold in our northern clime, but the poorest house on the estate was warm for every autumn wood was drawn from the forests of the domain, and placed at the doors of the needy—first, at St. Roch's, and afterwards at St. Ours.

When intelligence reached the Manor or House of an approaching departure of a family for the factories of the United States, the father and mother were reasoned with, and sometimes dissuaded from leaving the old homestead. If circumstances compelled expatriation, the children always went to bid adieu to their benefactress, and Miss de St. Ours, taking advantage of the visit, had an appropriate word for each—pointing out the dangers and temptations to which they would be exposed in a factory town, where it would not be as at their own foyer. Then came cheerful words of comfort and encouragement, and wishes for a bon voyage, and a garment of some kind for each child, made, the most part, by the loving hands of the members of the family. The villagers and habitants love to tell such tales of the never ceasing solicitude of their beloved seigneresse, and the sad silent exhibition of grief of the whole population on Saturday last, when bearing to their resting place the remains of her who had been their friend and helper, was the best tribute to her excellence and worth. Hers was the charity which, in the usage of the Divine word, was love in its broadest and best manifestation, and which, alas! is fast becoming legendary. Her life presents an example of the most admirable unity, and the advice happily placed above the altar in mourning attire, "La croix et le resument toute sa vie," faithfully records it.

Miss de Ours, but it may be said, in the words of the poet:—

Her faith was as the tested gold,
Her hope was firm—as overlaid
Her charity was count—untold.
Misereere Domine.

CATHOLICS AND CREMATION.

The presence of plague cases in Glasgow, says the Catholic "Times" of Liverpool, raises the question of cremation, and it is well that we Catholics should remind ourselves that the Holy See forbids all members of the Church to will or bequeath their bodies to be burned, and disallows cremation except in a few eventualities, such as plague or battle. By plague is not meant isolated cases of the widespread and fatal epidemic of any widespread infectious disease. Isolated cases, such as those in Glasgow, can always be dealt with by the proper use of antiseptics in the coffin and the grave. We, as dutiful Catholics, will leave the final decision in the matter to the proper authorities, the Bishop of the diocese and the Holy See. No epidemic of infectious disease has ever been traced to the custom of burying the dead. The great danger is plainly from the infected living. The organic matter in the shape of dead bodies deposited in a well-kept graveyard is less than that removed from its surface in the form of vegetation, and considerably less than that spread as manure over a cultivated field. While the cremation cranks object to bodies buried deep in the earth in modern well-planned cemeteries they take no notice of the unmanured fields, which contaminate wells and rivers, for they know that to suggest the cremation of field manure would be simply nonsense. The best reply to the arguments of the cremationists is to be careful that our cemeteries are well ordered and protected from polluting the soil, the air, or more particularly the sources of drinking water. Finally, let Catholics do everything in their power to discountenance the London half-penny press from creating a groundless panic.