

THE TRUE WITNESS

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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NOTICE.

All subscribers who are in arrears for more than one year are hereby notified that if the arrears are not paid up on or before the first of May next, their paper will be stopped, because the prompt payment of subscriptions is of vital importance to the financial standing of THE TRUE WITNESS, and even the stopping of the paper by no means relieves a subscriber of the legal or moral obligation of paying such a just debt.

Montreal, 28th March, 1894.

EASTER.

"*Consummatus est*," "it is consummated," was the cry that startled Good Friday's echoes, and at which the earth trembled, the sun grew dark, the veil of the temple was rent and the dead came forth to haunt the bye-ways. Deep and sombre the cloud that descended upon the world; the Hope of centuries had come and had vanished; the promised Saviour was born, lived, preached, taught, established His laws, suffered the most terrible tortures ever inflicted upon man, died and in dying declared that all was over, that the end had come. Dark as were the clouds that hung over Calvary, darker were the forebodings in the minds of many a follower of Christ, when he cried out *consummatus est*. Dim as was the sun over the vale of giants, dimmer still were the hopes of the Apostles and Disciples, when they heard that all the expectation as well as labors were finished, and finished in death. Great as was the tearing of the tabernacle veil, greater by far was the tearing of the Mother's heart when the Son of God declared that all was ended. Fierce as were the Roman soldiers during all that tragic series of events, fiercer still was the exultation of the Priests, the Scribes and the Pharisees, when they beheld Jesus suspended from the cross, and declaring to the world that it was all over with His mission. Thrilling as was the sensation of the Jews when they beheld the dead coming forth from their graves, more thrilling was their feeling of joy when they saw the Nazarene carried to the tomb. How proud they were when the seal of the city was set upon the stone that closed that burial vault! How careful in their choice of soldiers to guard the spot! They did not fear His return, but they did think that His followers might steal the body and pro-

claim Him arisen. What had they to dread since the dying Christ, Himself, cried out *consummatus est*?

As the sun of the third morning appeared above the hills of Judaea, the portals of heaven were flung open, an angel—followed by a choir such as sang over Bethlehem thirty-three years before—descended to earth; the guards were dazzled and their spears fell from their palsied hands; the celestial being broke the seal, rolled away the stone, and the Saviour—glorious in His transfigured splendor—came forth, while the millions of pure spirits made the heights of Zion and Moriah, the Mount of Olives and the Valley of Jehosaphat, ring with the song of victory, "*Resurrexit sicut dixit*!" Yes, it was all over with suffering, the consummation of sacrifice had taken place; the reign of triumph had commenced and Christ was arisen. We are told that the sun danced with joy on Easter morning; such would not be surprising even were it true, for all creation must have heaved a sigh of relief and burst into a cry of exultation. The world seems somehow happier on Easter than at any other time of the long year. Nature revives at that period; from the wintry tomb and the cold white shroud of a dreary season the earth comes forth and dons garments of verdure indicative of new life, the streams burst through their icy barriers, the skies fold up their grey cloaks of cloud and display their deepest and purest of blue, the birds return to the woods and make the long silent forest harmonious with songs of jubilation, the morns and eves grow farther apart, and the balmy, caressing breezes fan the brow of night and caress the cheek of day. In all that rejuvenation man alone seemed not to always participate; yet for him were the seasons made, the sky and earth created, the birds bid to sing, the zephyrs told to rise; for him was the *consummatus est* of Friday spoken; for him was the Resurrection of Sunday accomplished. Wonderful though it may seem, man—made to the image of God and the object of all the tragic and then glorious events of the Redeemer's life—is alone, amongst all created beings, to ignore the grandeur of Easter and to refuse to arise from the tomb of iniquity with the Saviour of the human race.

Christ is arisen according to His promise. Of that fact there can be no room for doubt. Every testimony that could possibly be brought to bear is at hand to establish the truth of the Resurrection. As a matter of Faith we cannot for a moment hesitate upon it; as a matter of Hope, it is the greatest consolation and assurance that humanity can possess; as a matter of Charity or Love, it is the fulfilment of every promise and the real consummation of the most supreme act of supernatural law that could possibly be recorded. During forty days have the members of Christ's Church been preparing for the glory of Easter. It has come at last; Easter, with its cornucopia of blessings; Easter, with its floods of unnumbered graces; Easter, with its bright days, smiling faces, purified hearts, and beautified arisen souls. Not only does the Church invite her children to participate in the benefits of this holy time, she commands them—and under the severest penalties—to come forth from the dark recesses of sinfulness and to join the Saviour in a glorious resurrection into a life of grace. Even as Christ shouted and commanded at the tomb of Lazarus, so does His spouse thunder her warnings into the sepulchres of moral death, ordering the buried one to arise and accept a new lease of spiritual life.

The period of Easter duty will soon

expire. If any of our readers have failed—through neglect, indifference, or design—to fulfil that one great obligation, let them not allow the season to pass without obeying the voice of the Church. The Easter duty is of paramount importance; otherwise the Church would not have surrounded it with so much emphasis and proclaimed it under such exceptional penalties. Moreover, we cannot see how any rational being, knowing the value of Easter Confession and Communion, could possibly neglect the invitation; hard indeed must have been the hearts of men when the Church is obliged to force them to accept the choicest of blessings. But those laws are for the few—the great body of Catholicity is to be found at the altar-rail on Easter Sunday. If you seek an evidence of the Saviour's Resurrection, go to the Catholic churches of any city, at sunrise on Easter day. There you will behold hundreds upon hundreds, men and women, aged and tottering creatures, young and buoyant people, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, all going in the same direction, all kneeling before the same altar, all receiving the same God, all arising with the same Christ, all bearing testimony—nineteen centuries after the event—to the truth of the world-thrilling, awe-inspiring, joy-compelling words, *Resurrexit sicut dixit*.

May this be a happy Easter for all our readers; may each one arise from the gloom of life's greatest misery into the light of life's truest peace; may the children in every household watch, with innocent hearts, for the sun dancing on the rim of the sky; may the aged recall their long bead-roll of happy Easters and reckon this amongst the best of them; may the strong and active continue to enjoy the blessings of this season; may the tear of Lenten sadness be removed by the smile of Easter joy; may the clouds of misery vanish before the sun of spiritual and temporal prosperity; may the afflictions of the Church be changed into triumphs, and may the guardian angel of each Catholic soul be able to say of his protegee—*Resurrexit sicut Christus*—"he had arisen like Christ."

THE CATHEDRAL.

On another page we give an account of the splendid and imposing ceremonies with which the great Cathedral of Montreal was dedicated on Sunday last. We also furnish a cut of that imposing edifice, and the details of its construction and all the dimensions. This structure is the grandest temple upon our continent and is an exact facsimile of Saint Peter's in Rome. It would not be right to allow the occasion to pass without saying a word on the subject of cathedrals.

In one of his dreamy, poetic and beautiful essays, Lamartine goes into ecstasies over the great churches of Europe. "I love," he says, "to ramble through the grand cathedrals of Italy; everything therein seems to speak, to preach, to exhort. The immense distances, wonderful proportions, dim twilights, shifting shadows, peculiar silences, all appeal to the soul and touch the heart; a temple thoroughly understood is the *resume* of humanity." Lamartine is right. The dedication of a stupendous temple—the result of labor and art combined—to the great Creator of all things, seems to us the most powerful tribute that man can pay to the Author of his being, the Omnipotent owner of the universe. Long ages before the advent of Christ, while yet the chosen people were wandering in all the desert bleakness of an incomplete system of adoration, the God of

Israel inspired the royalty of Judea with the conception of that wonderful temple of Solomon which crowned the summit of Zion and was the greatest miracle of architecture known to antiquity. The pagans even felt that worship demanded structures in accordance with the majesty and glory of the beings adored. On the Acropolis of Athens, the fallen columns and broken pillars of the Parthenon tell all too eloquently of the once gorgeous edifice that looked down upon the "City of the Violet Crown." The Roman Pantheon is a relic of the past that impresses upon the mind the assurance that in days of idolatry the conception of a fitting temple was uppermost in the minds of the people. But it was reserved for Christianity to erect the most magnificent structures that have ever been built by human hands and to dedicate them to the service of the one only true God. In hundreds of cases has the mandate gone forth to raise a temple that would be calculated to attract the children of earth to the ceremonies of our immortal Faith. In countless instances might the lines of Simmons be applied:

"He spoke—it was done—and with pomp such as glows
Round a sunrise in summer, a temple arose,
There sculpture her miracles lavish'd around,
Until stone spoke a worship diviner than sound."

Look at the cathedrals of Europe! Who is not inspired with lofty ideas, noble thoughts, grand sentiments, pure aspirations, gratitude, wonder, love and adoration, when contemplating these different, yet all majestic, pyramids that speak man's acknowledgment of God's Omnipotence! Descending the slopes of the vine-clad hills from Albano, the broad Campagna spreads out its level and uninviting fields before the eye, the mammoth skeletons of the old Roman Aqueducts straggle across the plain, and the yellow Tiber winds its noiseless way along; Rome is but a mass of gray walls and level buildings; everywhere uniformity; nothing, save memories of dead ages, to awaken an interest. Not so! High over all rises the great dome, with its golden ball, its surmounting cross, and the masterpiece of Angelo's genius challenges the admiration, rivets the attention, excites the wonder of even the dullest. No man, possessing a soul susceptible of fine emotions, could ascend the steps of St. Peter's, enter the portico, stand beneath that wonderful dome, gaze upon the realization in stone of the most extraordinary dream that ever haunted the brain of architect or artist, without feeling that he is drawn nearer to God, has become more in touch with the sublimity of creative power, has been raised a degree nearer to the unseen mansions of ineffable glory. And it is a miniature—and yet a giant one—of this, the grandest temple of earth, that we in Montreal possess. As the great cross of St. Peter's rises high over the city of the Seven Hills, the cross on our cathedral dome appears above the Rome of "America." Yonder flows the Tiber, here rolls the St. Lawrence; there rises Mount Aventine, here towers Mount Royal; there glitters the cross above the debris of centuries, here flashes that symbol over prospects of the future; there is the Vicar of Christ in his prison palace, here is his representative fulfilling his mandates; there is the birth-place of Catholicity for Europe, here is its cradle for America; there is the faith of Christ, here is the same belief; there is the Church, here she is likewise—the same, one Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Universal, Roman Church. Thank God for our Temples! Thank God for our Cathedral!

They speak of art and science combined, and the Church of Rome attempt-