

The True Witness

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1896.

OUR SOUVENIR.

In our last issue we mentioned the fact that we intend issuing a special St. Patrick's Day number of THE TRUE WITNESS this year. Instead of bringing out this a souvenir number, as was done in 1895, previous to the feast of Ireland's patron saint, it will only appear after the celebration in order to enable us to present our readers with a full account of all the events of the day. At first we had intended fixing the price—as announced last week—at the ordinary five cents per copy; but, in view of the numerous additional attractions, the illustrations and the various costly materials to be used, we will be obliged to sell the Souvenir number at ten cents per copy. We hope to be able to give our subscribers and numerous friends value for ten times that small amount.

According as we perfect our arrangements, during the coming few weeks, we will let our readers know something about what may be expected. We might here state, that Her Excellency, Lady Aberdeen, has already promised us an original article, on a subject very interesting to all Irishmen, which she is now preparing specially for this year's Souvenir True Witness. In addition to this contribution—which, in itself, will be a grand attraction—we may state that original articles, on various Irish topics, from the pens of leading Irish-Canadians, will appear. The Hierarchy, the Bench, the Bar, the Legislative bodies, the Senate, and the various important and representative elements of Irish Canadian society will be represented in our columns. Next week we will furnish still further particulars. Meanwhile we trust to our host of friends to join hands in making this souvenir number a grand success.

The Shamrock Fancy Fair will open in the Windsor Hall on Saturday, the 1st of April.

PERPETUITY.

Numerous and varied are the questions that correspondents ask us. Sometimes they are quite pertinent; very often they are both puzzling and unreasonably so. A few weeks ago one writer wanted to know what was the "Perpetuity of the Church," and as we did not make any reply, having had too many subjects of moment to treat, he comes at us with a club and expresses the opinion that we do not know how to answer his question. It is quite possible that he can find hundreds far more competent than we are to satisfy him on the point; yet, we hope he will accept the following—despite our incapacity—as a short reply. The perpetuity of the Church means the uninterrupted existence and unchanged form of that institution. It takes in the past, the present and the future of the Church.

Since we are on the subject we might as well state that there is no greater sign of the Divine origin of the Catholic Church than this very unchangeableness and perpetual existence. The Angel Gabriel, in addressing the Blessed Virgin as the speaking of the Savior to be born of her, said that He "shall reign in the house of Jacob forever, and of His Kingdom there shall be no end." St. Luke records these words, and they are sufficiently strong and clear to leave their meaning undisturbed. The Angel plainly said that the Church, to be established by Christ, would go on forever, and have no end.

King the words of Christ to St. Peter and him, according to St. Matthew, saying, just as emphatically, "Thou Art Peter, and upon this rock I will build

My Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." No matter how the powers of darkness may assail that institution they can never prevail. Christ did not promise that His Church would be free from persecution, that the legions of evil would not attack her, that tribulations, misfortunes and trials would not come; all He promised was that the Church would be perpetual and would, therefore, survive and successfully resist all these. He also promised that He would be with them (the Apostles and their successors) "all days even to the consummation of the world"—Matt. XXVIII, 19-20.

If, then, Christ were God, and the true Founder of the Church, and that He has been with it throughout all time, it stands to reason that it must be perpetual. This evidence, taken from the Bible itself, is confirmed by history. From this closing point of the nineteenth century we can look back over the expanse of years that reaches from our time to the origin of Christianity, and in all that immense space we behold the perpetuity of the Church firmly established. Empires, Kingdoms, Republics, have risen, have flourished, and have gone down to dust; cities have been built, monuments erected, and institutions founded, all of which have crumbled under the hand of Time; the barbarian of the North and the Mohometan of the South have, each in turn, flourished the memories of destruction in the face of the Divinely constituted Church; all have failed, the "gates of hell" have never prevailed, and to-day the Church is the same as she was in the beginning and as she will be unto the end of time. All other things change; she alone is immutable. To use the sublime words of a Protestant orator, "she stands alone like some majestic monument in the desert of antiquity, solid in her foundation, majestic in her aspect, cemented by the blood of her martyrs, pouring forth the unbroken series of her venerable hierarchy, and only the more magnificent from the ruins by which she is surrounded."

There is a beautiful passage in one of the famous Lacordaire's sermons, in which he illustrates the perpetuity of the Church, by drawing a picture of the old man at the Vatican, who holds the keys of St. Peter. Emperors, Potentates, princes come to him and offer him all kinds of inducements but he will not change for them. They point out to him that, in the world to-day, everything changes, and that he should change with the world; but that old man replies that the world may change while he (the Church is meant) cannot do so. When asked the reason he replies that all other powers are human and subject to mutation; but his power, coming from God, like God, cannot change; it must remain the same through all time. The perpetuity of the Church is a proof of her Divine origin.

The executive officers of the Shamrock Fancy Fair are: Honorary president, Lady Hingston. Honorary vice-presidents: Mrs. James McNamee, Mrs. J. J. Curran, Mrs. C. J. Doherty. President, Mrs. T. F. Moore. Vice-presidents: Mrs. M. J. Polan, Mrs. F. Wilson. Treasurer, Mrs. McKenna. Secretary, Miss Gertrude Stafford.

THE PRIEST'S VOCATION.

The other day a very good and well-intentioned gentleman informed us that he was educating his son to be a priest. Some years ago he and his wife decided that this boy should be dedicated to the Church and consequently, while the lad was yet under ten, they resolved that, come what might, they would have him enter upon religious life. The lad is about fifteen now, and the father feels very bad because he fears the boy does not relish the idea of studying for the priesthood. Still the parents hope to be able to dispel his ideas of the present and to coax him into the pathway that they have marked out for his future.

While we are ever glad to note the increase in the number of ecclesiastics, still we believe that nothing is more unwise than to force a young person into a life that is not evidently his vocation. Parents may have the laudable desire to have a priest in their family, but they must remember that the "calling" or "vocation" must come from God. Numerous are the lives lost, the souls gone to perdition, on account of a hurried or careless decision in a matter of such moment. Were it not for this we would not have so many ex-priests, as they are called, and so many unfortunate priests. As a rule these poor people have entered upon the sacerdotal life without having a certain vocation therefor; only after their irrevocable vows are pronounced do they discover their error; then comes regret, uneasiness, waverings, melancholy, cravings for the unattainable, and eventually acts that lead to correction, and finally to misfortune.

The vocation consists in certain qualities, dispositions, aptitudes, tastes and inclinations which render a man fit to follow a certain calling. And if it is so

for a lawyer, a physician, a merchant, an engineer, or any other profession or business, much more so is it for a priest. The man who enters upon a worldly career is at liberty to leave it when he finds he was mistaken; not so the priest. In no way is the parent qualified to decide upon a child's vocation. The most that can be expected of the father and mother is that they be willing to co-operate when, in a proper manner and at the proper time, the young person discovers, through study, prayer, and the aid of a spiritual director, which path has been marked out by the finger of God for him to follow.

Again do we repeat that it is unwise, unjust and extremely dangerous for parents to seek to impose their intentions, in such matters, upon their children. Long after the parents are dead the young person—grown to manhood—may eat the bitter fruit of repentance and suffer a life of untold torture on account of a false filial devotedness that induced him to accept as his vocation the career chosen by those who were incompetent to guide him properly.

Mrs. T. F. Moore, president of the Shamrock Fancy Fair, will preside at the refreshment table. Mrs. Moore intends holding a series of banquets.

A GRAND OLD PRIEST.

Last week we received a visit from the Reverend and Venerable Father O'Connell. He came down from his home at the Guy street convent to pay us his annual visit. Need we say that we were overjoyed to find him even heartier and stronger than twelve months ago. Hundreds who will read this paper will recall the good and true friend of whom we write; thousands of those who knew him well—almost all his contemporaries have long since gone over to the silent majority. Truly may we call him, in the words of Holmes:

"The last leaf upon the tree."

On the third day of this month—last Monday—Father O'Connell celebrated his ninety-fifth birthday. To converse with him, walk down street with him, and recall other days with him, you would not suppose that he had passed the allotted span by more than five or six years. This month this really "Grand Old Man" will celebrate a still more exceptional anniversary. On the twenty-ninth of February he will fulfil his sixtieth year of ordination. He was ordained on the twenty-ninth of February, 1836, by the first Bishop of Montreal, Mgr. Lartigue. This anniversary comes only every four years, and this being leap year Father O'Connell will celebrate it.

In talking about THE TRUE WITNESS, he said that he considers himself its oldest living subscriber. And so he is; for he subscribed for this paper forty-five, now nearly forty-six, years ago, when it first appeared; and with the exception of one year—when his mission was removed from all postal communication—he has kept up his connection with this organ.

Not only in Montreal was Father O'Connell well known, but all through the Valley of the Ottawa. It will please many of his old friends and parishioners around Richmond, Fallowfield and the Carpe, to know that he carries his ninety-five years well. Every day he says Mass, and, in fact, feels delighted to think that God, in His goodness, has reserved for him such a great consolation. If—

"The mossy marble rest

On the lips that he has pressed

In their bloom,

And the names he loved to hear

Have been carved for many a year

On the tomb;—"

still what a happiness it must be to have numbered so many years of duty well fulfilled, blessed with friendships that are unforgotten, lit with hopes that have been realized, charged with graces truly corresponded with! If a long and happy life even in this world is the reward of the dutiful son, what must not have been Father O'Connell's filial devotion—not only to his earthly parents, in the long, long ago, but all through those many decades, to the Holy Mother Church, whose consecrated priest he is?

As his birthday was a happy celebration, may his sacerdotal anniversary be one of joy and consolation! May he be granted years yet to reap the reward of his great labors in a well-earned rest, and in the respect, love and veneration of all who are privileged with his acquaintance, is the fervent wish we express for the noble *doyen* of our Canadian priesthood.

Mrs. G. A. CARPENTER will preside at the Flower Table at the approaching Shamrock Fancy Fair.

THE VOCE DELLA VERITA reports that amongst the Copts in Egypt the conversions to the Church are very numerous. Over fifteen village churches have been built. Thus does the grand work go on.

The presidents of the Snowshoe, Football, Bicycle and other sections in connection with the Shamrock Fancy Fair will be appointed at a meeting of Ladies this afternoon at the S.A.A.A. rooms.

THE SHAMROCKS' FAIR.

The Shamrock Amateur Athletic Association is one of the best known, most popular and certainly most deserving organization of the class in Montreal. It has done wonders for the development of the physical strength of a whole generation of young men, has been instrumental in bringing our city honorably before the great public of Canada, and, in fact, of America, and has opened out a broad avenue for the aspiring youth to travel successfully in the future.

For the first time in the history of the Association its officers and members are able to say that they have "a home of their own." Numberless are the obstacles that had to be surmounted, the difficulties to be overcome, the delays to be patiently borne; but perseverance and energy have, at last, obtained their reward, and the new Shamrock grounds are a credit to the Association and a boon to the city. Although secured and fitted out by the Association, still they cannot be said to belong to any one section of the people in particular; all—irrespective of nationality or other divisions—participate in the benefits to be derived from such a magnificent arena. The men of the day will move gradually off the scene, and the younger generation will soon replace them; these grounds, and all their appurtenances, will be the heritage of our young men for long years to come.

The purchase of the property, the building of the Club House, the grand covered stand, the open stands, the fencing, the opening up of the avenue, and all the improvements, have cost in the vicinity of \$40,000. At present there are about \$25,000 still due by the Association, on that bulk amount. The present directors are trying to reduce the debt to a sum the interest upon which would not exceed \$1,000 per year. When they succeed in this the institution will be on a more solid and safe footing.

The intention is to hold a grand fancy fair, at the Windsor Hall, on Saturday, 18th of April. The object of this fair will be to aid in accomplishing the laudable aim of the present directors. This, indeed, should appeal to all lovers of athletic and many exercises and sports. We know of no more praiseworthy object, in that line, and we are confident that both young and old, from all sections of the city, will join hands in making this undertaking a marked success. We could fill columns on the benefits derived by the public in general, and the young men in particular, from the operations of the S.A.A.A.; but we will be satisfied, this week, with the mere mention of the foregoing fact, and the expression of the fervent hope that the matter will be taken up with that energy which has ever characterized Montreal's citizens on similar occasions.

Mrs. McKenna, mother of the president of the Association, and treasurer of the Shamrock Fancy Fair, will have the direction of the Lacrosse Table.

AN IMPORTANT OFFICE.

While it is our special duty to look after the interests—individually and collectively—of our co-religionists, in the various walks of life, we must not forget that there are numbers of those belonging to our faith who, for one reason or another, are removed from the sphere of every day activity, yet who should be none the less objects of our consideration. It is human to err; and Catholics, being human, like their fellowmen of other creeds, fall into sin, crime, and misfortune. In our prisons and penitentiaries a large proportion of the inmates are Catholic; and, if there are circumstances under which the reforming influences of religion should be brought into play, surely conspicuous amongst them is the state of punishment in which such people live. According to the remarks of the late Minister of Justice, on a recent occasion, the Catholics and Protestant (or non-Catholics) in our various penitentiaries are about equal in number.

Under the late Sir John A. Macdonald a Board of official penitentiary Directors was formed, and it was an understood rule that, at least, one member of that Board should be a Catholic. The reason, and the fairness of it, must be apparent to every person. The Board consisted of three members; the Minister and Deputy Minister of Justice, and the Inspector of penitentiaries. Since the superannuation of Mr. J. G. Moylan, a Catholic and experienced officer, there has not been any member on the Board to specially represent the interests of our co-religionists. Moreover, all the executive staff, without exception, are non-Catholics. If we omit St. Vincent de Paul penitentiary, we find that all the wardens—from Atlantic to Pacific—are non-Catholics. These are the bare facts; and they might serve as text for many a long article upon a subject of very vital importance.

Attention was recently called to this matter by the *Arcturion* Chronicle, and we feel that it is our duty to touch upon the matter. As far as the treatment of the inmates of these institutions is concerned, it is a known fact that the most perfect secrecy prevails amongst

the officials. Consequently the public has no means of knowing, except through ex-convicts, or by indirect ways, how the Catholic element is dealt with in matters pertaining to the practice of their religious duties and in regard to that even-handed justice which should be meted out to all. It is of the utmost importance that persons having business connections with these institutions should also receive the consideration they deserve, irrespective of their special religious convictions. We do not, at present, make any particular accusation; but, it would not be surprising if partiality, on the score of religion, were sometimes shown, and even that injustice, in the dismissals of officials, the curtailing—for good conduct or other cause—the terms of convicts, were perpetrated. Besides, both in the ordinary practice of their religious duties and in the special needs that the imprisoned individuals should have supplied to them, it is absolutely necessary that some one, competent to judge of the same, from a Catholic point of view, should have an official position on the Board of Directors.

We simply draw attention to the facts that at present there is no Catholic member on the Board; that it is of paramount importance to our co-religionists that they should have some one to represent them in that sphere; that it was the express wish of the late Premier—Sir John A. Macdonald—that all sections should be so represented; and that it is highly important that a Catholic should be given a voice in the deliberations that affect such a large number of persons, whose situation places them beyond the power of having redress if such is merited.

Mrs. M. J. Polan has been named president of the Hockey Table at the Shamrock Fancy Fair.

WRITERS AND SPEAKERS.

The Gentleman's Magazine says that the difference between writers and speakers is, after all, to be discovered in temperament. To carry out this theory the writer says: "The presence of an audience, especially a large audience, has always one of two effects on a man; it either stimulates or depresses him. To the born speaker it lends vivacity to the intellect and fluency to the tongue; others it strikes dumb. A man may, of course, be fluent without being an orator. An empty man is often fluent—that is due to vanity; a pompous man is sometimes confident and ready of speech—that is due to conceit. The one chatters on, serenely unconscious that he is talking nonsense; the other has too lofty a sense of his own importance to suspect for a moment that his rounded periods are mere commonplace. The fact is that in every case the fruit smacks of the soil."

There is a great deal of truth in all this; but it does not give the reason why so many splendid writers are great failures as public speakers. We do not call the orator—that is the born orator—the man who writes out, revises, and carefully commits to memory a set speech or lecture, and then delivers it with good effect. That man may be an able writer, a grand essayist, and a first-class elocutionist—orator; but he is not an orator. Let some one in the audience interrupt him, break the chain of his argument, or disturb the lines he has learned by heart, and you will then find out whether he is an orator, or merely a writer who delivers his own compositions, as an actor would repeat the words of an author. A man may be the most exact and elegant writer in the world and be totally devoid of oratorical powers. Rarely are both combined. Why so?

When a man composes and writes, no matter how rapidly his ideas come, he is obliged to pause over each while performing the mechanical work of transcribing the words to express it; he, therefore, has ample time to form his sentences, select his words, and polish the style. Even should he find, on sudden after-thought, that some other word would be preferable, he has only to draw his pen through the one written and substitute the one preferred. But when in presence of an audience the language must come as fluently as the ideas, and he must be able to shape and trim, to correct and arrange his expressions, even before they are uttered. Therefore, he must think like lightning, arrange his ideas with equal rapidity, select and use the expressions with electric swiftness and precision. Practice does much to perfect the speaker; but that is not all. Men accustomed to addressing audiences will rattle away for any given time; but how many of them use proper English, speak grammatically, never hesitate for an expression, always use the proper word, and give their sentences that elegant turn which charms the ear and adds force, while adding beauty, to the form? How many of them never repeat the same words, or same ideas? How many of them make use of timely quotations? In a word, how many of them sit down after having imprinted on the minds and memories of the audience the original ideas that they conceived? Not one in five hundred. Fling out a series

of words, a string of phrases, a very volley of expressions, may be styled public speaking, but it is no more oratory than the ceaseless flow of talk by a good auctioneer or a clever circus advertiser.

The man who possesses the rare gift of writing well, but who has not a real orator's talent, should never attempt public speaking. He runs the risk of destroying his well-merited reputation in the sphere that belongs to him. On the other hand there are born orators; men whose ideas come at will and whose language, manner and delivery are perfect; but who are unable to write a page of composition above the ordinary or common-place. Such men need the stimulus of an audience to stir their powers into activity. In the calmness of the study they are unable to awaken the spirit within themselves; and consequently less able to awaken it in their readers. Rarely do you find the able writer and the good speaker combined in the same person; but when both exist that individual possesses a double-edged sword of fearful weight.

Mrs. FRANK WILSON will preside at the Candy Table at the Shamrock Fancy Fair.

WORK OF THE CHURCH.

Recently, Professor Lodge, of the non-Catholic Columbian University, delivered a remarkable lecture, in Washington, on the work of Catholicity in the general civilization of the world. Extracts from this lecture were given by the Catholic Columbian. So exceptional were the remarks of Dr. Lodge, and so truthful his estimate of the influence and operations of Catholicity upon the world, that we deem them sufficiently important to be reproduced on our editorial page, for the benefit of our readers—Catholic and non-Catholic as well. Amongst other things, the learned lecturer said:—

"It would be difficult to over-estimate the importance of the historic function performed by the Catholic Church during the Middle Ages.

"She unified the education of Europe. The instruction of youth was cast in molds of her make. She was the conservator of the learning, culture and civilization of antiquity. She was the ark in which were preserved the forms of literature when all Europe was submerged beneath the surging tide of barbarism. She lifted her eyes above the poor, the weak and the helpless. She stood between the over-burdened taxpayer and the extortions of the emperor.

STEMMED THE FLOOD.

"She strove to transform the barbarian hordes who had poured like an invading flood over the sunny plains of Gaul and Italy into citizens of the commonwealth of God. She held up before the multitude high ideals of Christian life. She sought to fire the heart with noble ambitions, to enrich the mind with the culture of past centuries and to lift the life to a plane of loftier activity.

"Her history during this period is made resplendent by the heroic deeds of many a saintly character. She threw the whole weight of her great influence on the side of law and order and civilization, when these were engaged in a death struggle with the forces of barbarism. When disintegration was everywhere else, the Catholic Church was striving to integrate the thought, the life and the culture of Europe. More than this, within the bosom of that Church itself, the principles of free self-government were allowed very considerable play. From the monks of the chapter who elected their abbot, to the college of Cardinals, who chose their Pope, free election characterized the government of the Church.

HER SPLENDID SERVICE.

"Nor when we look through long tracts of history and see what splendid service this church has rendered to God, and to humanity, and to civilization, however great may be the divergences between our theological opinions and the opinions recognized by that Church, we are bound to speak the truth of history and award the meed of praise where honor is due.

"Personally, as you well know, I hold to views which are separated by the whole diameter of thought from Catholic doctrine, but my studies have for years compelled me to live in closest intellectual comradeship with many of the greatest minds that ever adorned that organization. I have learned to admire them, to reverence them, to love them. St. Francis d'Assisi, Ignatius Loyola, St. Francis de Sales, Fenelon, Pascal, Malbranche and scores of other names that rise to my lips, seem to me to be among the grandest souls of all the centuries. I refuse utterly and absolutely to join in a sweeping, indiscriminate and ignorant denunciation of the Catholic Church.

HER INSPIRED WRITERS.

"If the spirit of Christ be not breathed forth from the pages of Fenelon, Pascal, and Malebranche, then I have totally mistaken my Master's thought. While, therefore, I most strenuously object to very many articles of Catholic theology, I refuse to shut my eyes to the glories of the Church's history, and to the magnificent martyrdoms with which her children have adorned the history of the race. I have, moreover, a profound admiration for the statecraft which has guided her history. Her leaders have known how, in every age, to change her line of battle as the front of battle changed. She always presents her face to the foe. She has a wonderful power of adjustment to meet the exigencies of the situation. Profound wisdom has directed her entire development. I can think of only one other example of political wisdom worthy to be compared to her, and that is the Senate of Rome, which, for century after century, under kings, republics, and empires, controlled the destiny of the Roman state in its ever widening development."