

The True Witness

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE,
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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 1897

A CATHOLIC CLUB.

The articles which have appeared in the *True Witness* on the subject of the adoption of means to promote unity of aim and method of effort, in secular matters, amongst the Irish Catholics of Montreal, have, as was to be expected, created considerable discussion amongst our readers. From a number of communications which have been addressed to us in this connection we select one which has come to hand this week from a prominent Irish Catholic merchant because it contains a valuable and practical suggestion.

Having stated that he takes great interest in the subject, and cordially approves of the ground which we have taken, he goes on to say that he is prepared to assist, to the utmost of his ability, any possible project that may be started with the desired end in view. "There is no reason," he says, "why we should not have a Catholic Club in Montreal somewhat after the pattern of the Catholic Club of New York, which has done Irish Catholics much good, and which has been a great success."

The establishment of a Catholic Club in Montreal, on lines similar to those on which the Catholic Club of New York is based, would be an admirable beginning, and, if properly and successfully carried out, would soon bring about the desired result.

The Catholic Club of New York exercises a commanding influence upon the public affairs of the Empire City. It is as thoroughly Irish in its spirit and organization as it is thoroughly Catholic. The Archbishop of New York is the honorary president; and its officers and members are loyal Catholics before everything else. Its membership includes the leading Catholic citizens of New York in all walks of life; and it is the focus and centre of Catholic lay-culture and activity. Its premises are the largest and most commodious of all the social clubs in the United States.

It now remains for some of our Irish Catholic citizens to take the initiative in founding an Irish Catholic Club in Montreal. A short circular letter addressed to the leading Irish Catholics of the city, requesting their attendance at a given place, to discuss the proposed organization, would, we feel certain, secure a large and influential attendance, and result in the adoption of the measures necessary to the prompt establishment of the club.

A SUGGESTION TO OUR SOCIETIES.

It has occurred to us that in apportioning rewards and prizes in our Irish Catholic schools, something might be done to interest our young people and their families and friends, not only in the cause of education but in some of our representative institutions.

All honor to those generous and enlightened friends of intellectual culture who have endowed medals or other prizes in connection with some of our important educational establishments. Some of these have reflected credit on art as well as on science or literature, which they were meant to encourage. To mention some, where all are praiseworthy, would, however, be invidious; and besides all that we desire at present is to offer a suggestion by which future benefactors may add to the value and usefulness of their gifts.

It is natural that those who endow a medal or other form of prize should wish to associate their own names therewith. Nor is there anything in what we are going to suggest to rob the founders of

such prizes of the honor that is their due. But why should they not, at the same time, be identified with some of our Irish societies or other institutions?

If, during their schoolboy or schoolgirl years our young people were led, for instance, to compete for a medal or other prize named after some of our religious, national, temperance, literary or athletic societies, would they not come in time to associate certain sentiments, aims and public services with those institutions, which would be likely to retain their sympathies when they became men and women?

There is no reason, indeed, why, within some of these societies themselves, there might not be endowments of prizes for one or other of the departments of intellectual effort. There are many ways, indeed, in which even small sums of money, opportunely offered, might be effectively expended for the deepening of interest in our Irish institutions and enterprises of every kind. That is, it is true, a matter for separate consideration.

What we would now suggest is the advisability of creating in the minds of our young people that sympathy with the aims and work of our Irish national, religious, literary, charitable, social and beneficent enterprises which comes from the constant identification of their names with some desirable object of ambition.

The experiment is, it seems to us, at least worthy of being tried, as the outlay involved would be small compared with the beautiful results which would ultimately follow. Such an undertaking would also do much to bring about that unity of aim for which we are all so earnestly striving.

GREATER MANITOBA.

The press which has lauded Mr. Greenway for his settlement of the school difficulty so "liberally and yet without sacrifice of principle," is now exalting his policy of expansion and co-optation. So far as the Premier of Manitoba is bent on turning the most valuable portion of Western Canada to the uses that Providence intended it for, we can join heartily in that commendation. But it would be well for the Catholics of Eastern Canada, and especially the French-speaking Catholics of this province, to put to themselves the question:

What does this policy of "Greater Manitoba" portend for the Catholic minority in the Prairie Province? It is the just boast of the French-Canadian population of older Canada, or perhaps it would be wiser to say that it is to them a cause of gratitude to the all-wise Disposer of Events, that the efforts of the Franco-phobe and anti-Catholic clique which for so long had influence in this province proved ineffectual to cause their destruction, either racially or religiously, and that to-day, after well nigh a century and a half, they form a strong French-speaking and Catholic element well able to cope with all its foes.

Now, if ever there was a community that seemed destined to preserve these distinctive rights of which French Canada has ever been guardful, it was the little colony of Red River before Manitoba began its organized life as a province. So sure, indeed, was the French and Catholic population of Manitoba of maintaining its position, if not of superiority, at least of equality, that it neglected to take precautions against possibilities which unhappily have become realities.

Older French Canada proved to be but little inclined to seek new homes for its more restless or enterprising sons in the North West, and consequently by the influx of an English-speaking and Protestant element from Ontario, strengthened by immigrants from Great Britain, the French and Catholic majority soon became a minority, which, as the years went by, became less and less.

For twenty years, the Protestants kept the pledges, originally made for their own advantage, but in 1890, by the evil counsel of outsiders, they deprived the minority of their rights.

The highest tribunal in the Empire has declared that the grievance thus created should be redressed. But the authorities who represent the majority defy the law and refuse to reserve the right to the minority. The latter have been betrayed by those in whom they trusted—men of their own blood and speech. And now the Premier of Manitoba is about to institute a policy which, if successful, is certain ultimately to reduce the Catholic minority only to the merest fraction of the population.

This is what "Greater Manitoba" means for the Catholics of the province. The *Cultivateur* may well bewail their condition, for surely they have fallen into merciless hands, and there seems but poor prospect of relief.

Catholics who have aided in bringing their brethren in the faith to such a deplorable position deserve the scorn of all true members of the Church. Their conduct is without excuse.

MISS BELLA MCCURRACH has been appointed an agent of *THE TRUE WITNESS*, and is authorized to collect all monies due for subscriptions, and to solicit new subscribers.

HON. EDWARD BLAKE.

It is a fitting tribute to the statesman-like ability and oratorical talents of the Hon. Edward Blake, M.P., that he should have been selected by all parties in Ireland—the Nationalists, the Healyites, the Redmondites, the Unionists, and the landlords, and the Orangemen—to act as their spokesman in the House of Commons on the subject of the over taxation of the country. He will move the amendment to the address in reply to the Queen's Speech, and will set forth, as he knows so well how, the great grievances from which Ireland suffers in this important matter. His speech, which will, doubtless, be a masterpiece, will be eagerly read by his Canadian fellow-citizens, who rejoice at the honor which has been conferred upon him by having been selected for the discharge of so onerous a task.

MRS. MURPHY'S BODY.

Some time ago the *True Witness* deplored, in rather strong terms, the lack of Christian charity in this city, of which the failure to remove the debris that covers the bones of poor old Mrs. Murphy within the walls of the recently burned Barron block was a striking illustration.

A few days ago the *Star*, with its characteristic business enterprise, ever on the lookout for something that promises to increase its already large circulation, took up the subject, and started a public subscription for the purpose of defraying the expenses necessary to the recovery and the interment of the body of the unfortunate victim of the conflagration, heading it with \$100 itself.

We have always disapproved, and we still disapprove, of this trafficking, for business purposes, in tragic subjects of this kind. Besides, the recovery of the body of Mrs. Murphy should not be the occasion of an appeal to public benevolence. It was the duty of somebody, of some department, to remove the debris that covers the body and hand the human remains over to the family of the victim. That this plain duty has not been performed is a grave matter, and one into which a thorough and searching investigation should be made.

It is not, therefore, a public subscription that is needed. What should be done is to convene a meeting of the Irish Catholics of the city with the object of insisting that this investigation shall be held, that the blame shall be located, and that the person or persons guilty of this neglect to discharge an obvious duty shall be duly punished.

Could there be a more forcible and, at the same time, a more pathetic, object-lesson illustrative of the paramount urgency and importance of unity amongst the Irish Catholics of Montreal in public affairs than this incident?

GERALD GRIFFIN.

The City Council of Limerick, Ireland, has just placed in its chamber a fine portrait of Gerald Griffin. It was a graceful, although a somewhat tardy, tribute to the genius of a writer who has shed lustre not merely upon the City of the Violated Treaty, but upon the whole Irish nation. Gerald Griffin's works, while they possess a due measure of dramatic strength of characterization, are without full of a tender, gentle, chaste and ennobling Catholic spirit, which communicates itself to his readers and makes them much the better for having read them.

WITHDRAW!

A correspondence that appeared recently in the *Catholic Columbian* (Columbus, Ohio), has caused us considerable surprise, and as much pain as surprise. An inquirer, who signs himself "Coelebs," is, it seems, in a quandary into which, we are supposed to believe, a good Catholic seldom falls.

"You may," he writes, "say what you will about marrying out of the Church, but I tell you that I don't know a Catholic young woman to whom I should care to pay attentions. I am acquainted with several young Catholic wives who come up to my very reasonable ideal and who make their husbands happy. But the supply in this neighborhood seems to be exhausted. The marriageable girls here are ill-bred, or uneducated, or homely, or sickly, or come from families with whom an alliance is not to be thought of."

It is a pity that "Coelebs" did not send his portrait for publication. Surely a young man, calling himself a Catholic, who would write in such terms of the Catholic ladies of the community of which he is a member ought to be known, so as to be avoided by the fair sex of the same faith everywhere.

When it is considered that in the matter of personal charms there is a practically endless diversity of tastes, that there are very few, on whose features vice or passion or lack of proper care has not left a discernible mark, who are not endowed with some attraction—and the attractions of so-called plain

persons, men as well as women, sometimes develop signally an acquaintance—and that, even in the extremely rare cases where no personal grace is present, there is almost sure to be some counterbalancing mental charm, it is certainly strange that any Catholic young man could bring himself to write such words of the ladies with whom he is, by his implied avowal, in daily intercourse.

That there exists any community on this continent in which the Catholic element offers no "marriageable girls," but such as are "ill-bred, or uneducated, or homely, or sickly, or come from families with whom an alliance is not to be thought of," is absolutely incredible.

Nevertheless, the editor of the *Columbian* Catholic, in reply to this fastidious inquirer, actually puts a priest on the witness stand in order to confirm his correspondent's outrageous statement. This reverend gentleman had heard "almost those very words of 'Coelebs' from a dear young friend of his, 'a very nice young man,'" whom he had asked why he did not choose a partner. He is unable, therefore, to reproach "Coelebs" with having reached a grave conclusion from insufficient premises. He accepts the outrageous slander without a word of rebuke, and adds a suggestion which, under the circumstances, seems inconsistent, if it is not cynical. He advises Catholic fathers to invite eligible young men to their homes so that their daughters may have opportunities of marrying well. The "eligible young men" are, we suppose, nice young men like "Coelebs" and the "dear friend" of the too confiding priest. The latter will hardly thank the editor for publishing his injudicious statement as to the paucity of worthy women of noble age in Catholic communities.

To us, indeed, the whole episode deserves the gravest condemnation. The editor of the *Catholic Columbian* owes a strongly-worded apology to the whole Catholic public of the American continent.

THE "DAILY WITNESS" AGAIN.

The *Daily Witness* continues its anti-Catholic vapors. "The letter of the curé of St. Malo, in Manitoba," it says, "to Mr. Tarte is an admirable expression of the surprise and indignation with which one who has been taught from infancy to regard a priest's word as not in anything to be disputed by a layman receives a challenge," &c., &c. How it chuckles over the acts of any Catholic who shows himself to be lacking in loyalty to the pastors of his church! But, after all, what is there for it to rejoice over? Nothing was more natural than that a priest should express surprise at the declarations of a Catholic layman who refuses to acknowledge the authority of the Church on a subject over which it is part of the mission entrusted to the Church by her Divine Founder to watch with earnest solicitude. It would have been surprising if the good curé of St. Malo had not expressed surprise at the incident. The *Daily Witness*, however, true to its principles, endeavors to put the incident in a false light, in order to have a fling at the Catholic Church.

A STARTLING INDICTMENT.

What is "Ontario's Weakness?" Some time ago most patriotic Ontario people would probably have hesitated, not a little surprised, before attempting to answer such a conundrum. The readers of the *Canadian Magazine* for January will learn more on the subject than perhaps they ever expected to be told.

Mr. Ernest Heaton not only supplies the answer to the question, but he furnishes facts and figures to show that it is correct. "It is, indeed, hard," he writes, "to have to admit that the Educational system of which we hoped so much must be ranked among the disappointments of life; that it has not decreased crime, and that, instead of an angel of light, it has proved an octopus with an angel's face, reaching out its tentacles into the houses and the pockets of the people, degrading our professions and depopulating the country. The language is strong but so are the facts."

Mr. Heaton then proceeds to give the facts in question. Two of the twelve departments in the Ontario school system have, he says, on the authority of Mr. Galt in the *Week*, cost the country seventy-nine million dollars in twenty years. In the year 1894-95 the cost was fourteen and a half million dollars. This enormous expenditure can only be justified on condition that it yields advantages proportionate to the outlay. How, then, asks Mr. Heaton, does the Ontario Educational System serve the public good? He does not find that it makes the people more moral.

In 1869 the commitments in the Province numbered 5,655; in 1889 they had increased to 12,531—an increase of 6,876, as against an estimated increase in population of 611,600. Juvenile crime has increased enormously. Can this increase be accounted for by pauper immigration? Certainly not altogether.

Mr. Justice Street, of Hamilton, pointed out at the last Spring Assizes that of the young men convicted for various crimes all but one had been educated at the public schools of the city.

The desire to get money to satisfy the desires of the extravagant and profligate has, Mr. Heaton urges, been fostered by free education, which has increased, far beyond the need, the number of professional men.

There are said to be 200 lawyers in Toronto unable to pay office rent, and the profession is alike overstocked all over the Province. Pushed to the wall, most men will swerve from the line of rectitude, and a profession thus degraded must work mischief. It is the same with the medical faculty. It is the same with the class of public school teachers. Advertise for one and you will have 150 applications! This overcrowding tends to send the best men from the country. American cities reap the benefits of that higher training for which Ontario is so heavily taxed.

Has the general intelligence of the people gained in the meantime? Mr. Heaton admits that it has to the extent that there are more who visit the reading rooms. But what do they read? On this point the statistics of Mechanics' Institutes and Public Libraries are disappointing, for the reading devoured is not that which nourishes the mind. Worse still, the young men turned out by the High Schools abandon the farm and workshop. Manual labor is distasteful to them. The boy who can conjugate a Latin verb has his head filled with rail-splitting presidents and printer's devils who became Prime Ministers. Admirable though such men may be, Mr. Heaton thinks it a misfortune that their biographies were ever written.

For fifteen years (1877-1892) the increase of teachers in actual service averaged 125 yearly. Yet the annual output from the Model Schools was 1,200. What became of the surplus? Are the pupils subjected to the ordeal of a succession of novices in order that the system may be kept up?

We have merely touched on some of the heads of Mr. Heaton's articles? Is he merely an exceptional pessimist? It seems not, for the editor of the *Canadian Magazine*, in his "Current Thoughts," uses still stronger language. "Ontario's Cancer" is the term with which he characterizes the school system of that Province. The cry for relief has, he says, begun to be heard everywhere already, although those who could speak with authority hesitate to speak out. He blames the High School masters, but only collectively. It is, in fact, the system that is at fault. Ontario needs more farmers, merchants, mechanics, and why should not provision be made for the due supply of those ranks of industry rather than give the professional class, and especially the teaching class, a monopoly of the advantage of the High Schools?

The complaint, backed, as it is, by statistics that startle and impress the serious reader, is clearly not without foundation, and a better distribution of the results of the Province's educational energies is evidently a desideratum that should be promptly filled. Nor is it in Ontario alone that the professional market is over-stocked.

THE GLOBE'S CREED.

The chief mouth-piece of anti-Catholic bigotry of Ontario, *The Globe*, of Toronto, has, in an editorial article, informed its readers of the kind of religious creed to which it subscribes.

It will be news to many people who know the principles which *The Globe* has for years been the exponent to learn that it has a creed at all. But not only has *The Globe* a creed of its own, it actually scolds everybody who has no creed. It says:

"The cry 'no creed' is a cry of thoughtless sentimentality. The man who calls for a religion without doctrines might as well ask for science without laws, navigation without charts, buildings without plan and framework, government without constitution or programme. There are two sides to all religious life, the intellectual and emotional. 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' Both of these elements are necessary to any true religious experience. When hymns become credulous they degenerate into the merest jigs and jingles, like some of our most modern 'sacred songs,' which raise vulgarities and gush almost to the level of blasphemy. The chants and hymns of the creed periods of the church can never lose their power."

What is *The Globe's* creed? It admits, by implication, that it did not know what its creed was until it had read a certain passage written by Dr. John Watson, the parson-novelist of Liverpool, England, who has achieved some fame by his story "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush." Here is *The Globe's* creed, which it finds that this writer has happily phrased for it:

"I believe in the fatherhood of God; I believe in the words of Jesus; I believe in the clean heart; I believe in the service of love; I believe in the unworldly life; I believe in the beatitudes; I promise to trust God and follow Christ, to forgive my enemies and seek after the righteousness of God."

Surely *The Globe* does not expect anybody to believe that it is sincere when

it states that this is its creed. Its daily conduct betrays such a creed. Its campaign of bitterness and hatred against the Catholic bishops of the province of Quebec, its feigned efforts to stir up religious rancor in the land, are totally at variance with the Beatitudes, and are entirely opposed to the teaching of the Prince of Peace who uttered them. How can *The Globe* "believe in the work of Jesus" when it hardly allows a day to pass without insulting and attacking the representatives of that Church with which He distinctly declared that He would always abide, even till the end of the world?

It is as ridiculous and illogical for *The Globe* to state that it has a "creed" as it is for it to talk about the "creed periods of the Church."

OUR PHILOSOPHER'S MUSINGS.

"Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works." Heb. 10 c. 24 v.

From the shadow of my sequestered hermitage I again creep forth along the highway of publicity, represented in this case by a column of the *True Witness*, to sun myself in the radiant literary atmosphere created by the brilliant scribes that indite your weekly paragraphs. I have long enjoyed the pleasures of a good listener, imbibing delectable mental nutriment gleaned from the broad fields of thought and the high peaks of imagination traversed by your more faithful correspondents. Lulled into peaceful quiet and dreamy repose by the rounded periods and bright phrases that formed the setting for the thought-jewels that weekly flashed in your columns, I laid down my well worn stub, content to leave the ground to better-equipped warriors while I in silence basked my rusty outfit with the practical up-to-date comments of Walter R., the high sentiments and instructive reflections of our well-beloved Bahette, and the vigorous and concise studies of the mysterious Silas Wegg, whose kind Christmas greeting I now acknowledge by wishing a bright year of continued influence in the journalistic arena.

The rustling of the New Year leaves that everybody was turning around me from my delightful reverie, and the wail of the "Lonely Man" winging its weary way athwart the weird winter wind-moans of the wan and waning year, banished my peaceful reflections, and roused me rudely to the stern realities of this vale of tears.

Alas! the leap year days are o'er;
No wonder his poor heart is sore,
His bright hopes flown for evermore.
"Ah! Nevermore!"

He is one of the mortals, thought I, who neglect, as the years pass by, to mark their flight by the turning of the customary new leaf; so I hastened away to find among the neglected contents of my private repository the documents that contained the records of past years, that I might be no laggard in my courtesy to the new.

Ah, me! I found the leaves were there in plenty. Some crawled with childish marks, some blurred and blotted by a careless hand, others were written in merry mood and bore rude sketches of bright laughing faces, long forgotten, and pleasant scenes; others were marred with unsightly stains with here and there a few delicate lines, carefully and slowly traced, then a long blank followed by lines blattered with tears. I wonder if the records of the Angel in the Book of Life bear any resemblance to the limping efforts marked by me. Duty sets the copy for us, and the first few lines of the new leaf are bravely, carefully followed, but a blot falls from the pen; we strive to erase it: the page is spoiled. What matters the rest? So we reason, and away we go with reckless haste—blot, blur, blot—scratch, scribble, scratch, until the page is filled and the year of life is closed and the dawn of a new year offers us again a spotless leaf to chronicle our newer, truer characters. The year of '97 is still new and young. Let us guard against the first blot that would mar for us the beauty of the white scroll of good deeds that we should strive to preserve unblemished until the new year comes again.

Eighteen hundred and ninety-seven was ushered in for the Church in Montreal, not by hymns of gladness but by the solemn chant of mourning over the bier of the dead Archbishop. The kindly countenance that so often lighted with benevolent expressions and genial smiles was still and cold, and marked with the ashen pallor of death. A few short months ago it beamed with kind benevolence and gentle amiability upon you, our humble representative at the Catholic Summer School, and his priestly hand was raised in benediction over the brow that once received the holy chrism of Confirmation from the same anointed hand.

He spoke approvingly of *THE TRUE WITNESS*, and made a kind reference to Mr. Michael Burke, its presiding officer. How short a time it seems, and yet sufficient for the dark shadow of death to enshroud the beloved shepherd and leave the flock wailing alone on the plain. His soul but waited to hear the closing strains of the "Gloria in Excelsis Deo," reverberating through his cathedral shrine on earth before winging its flight through the shadows of the valley of Death to seek the Infant Saviour, not in the poor stable of Bethlehem, like the shepherds of old, led on by a star, but in the glory of His Eternal Kingdom.

K. DOLORES.

Bishop Tierney has just purchased a valuable property in Hartford, which he intends to use as a college for the preparatory studies of clerical students. It was formerly known as the Collins Street Classical School, and the building was erected some twenty years ago as a Chinese educational institution. The faculty of this new college is to be chosen from the priests of the diocese, and the course will probably be five years.