

OBJECTIONS AND REMONSTRANCES
AGAINST THE
DISMEMBERMENT
OF THE
ANCIENT PARISH OF MONTREAL,
AND THE PROPOSED ERECTION OF THE
PARISHES OF ST. JAMES AND ST. PATRICK'S,
MADE AT MEETINGS HELD IN SEPTEMBER AND NOVEMBER, 1866.

Montreal :

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MONTREAL, September 20th, 1866.

VERY REVEREND VICAR GENERAL,

In conformity with the desire you expressed in the assembly of to-day, I hasten to send you in writing some special observations on the dismemberment of the Parish of Montreal. In doing so, I shall be guided solely by the interests of religion, and the spiritual welfare of the people for whom I have for so many years labored.

The Catholics who speak English as their mother tongue, form a little over the third of the whole Catholic population of this Parish, and are scattered over its surface in different proportions. Within the limits of the projected Parish of St. James, there is a considerable number of Irish Catholics, who are proprietors, and consequently entitled to be present at the meeting of to-day. They were not represented by even one of their number. The official notice convening the meeting, was not read in any of the Churches in which they are accustomed to hear mass on Sunday; and that notice was in a language which they do not understand.

Under these circumstances, I deem it my duty to use the perfect knowledge I possess of their wishes and of their sentiments, to place before you, for the serious consideration of His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal, the following observations. I shall confine myself to a single point which, I believe, to be of vital importance to the people amongst whom I labor, and on which I am sure to express the feelings and convictions of every one of them.

At present, and for several years past, the English speaking Catholics have Churches, conveniently situated in different localities, in which they attend Divine worship and receive religious instruction on Sundays. The happiest results have been obtained of this system. The English speaking Catholics are happy and content, obedient to their pastors, advancing in piety every year, and every year more generous in their contributions towards works

of charity and religion. Another blessing flowing from this system is, a marked diminution of the strifes and jealousies, which before separated the two great divisions of Catholics, speaking different languages.

If the tree is best known by its fruit, we must admit that this arrangement, which every day produces in greater abundance, the blessed fruits of peace, harmony, piety, and charity, is, indeed, a good arrangement, and one which should be fostered by every means, and at every sacrifice. It appears to me that the interests of the Church here, and the well-being of our Catholic population without distinction, demand this. The Church cannot derive strength from divisions amongst her children, and piety cannot be nourished on heart-burnings and bitter jealousies.

You will not be surprised after this, that I am filled with painful alarm by the projected change in the condition of our people ; and that I am prepared to cast myself at the feet of His Lordship, and implore him, with all the earnestness of my soul, to be pleased to stop, and take into his most serious consideration, the natural, I will even say, the certain consequences that will follow from the change that is to be inaugurated in the new Parish of St. James. Oblige the Irish and Canadians to attend in the same Church, for religious worship and instruction, and immediately you bring into collision all the susceptibilities and jealousies, and, I must add, dislikes of these two people. Time will but increase the evil, and open scandal will soon be the result.

This forced amalgamation of two populations, differing in their feelings and habits even more than in their language, will, I fear, lead to another and still more fatal evil. I would wish to suppress my apprehensions on this point through respect for my Bishop, and lest I should be misunderstood ; but I deem it a sacred duty, not to withhold anything that may aid His Lordship to examine this momentous question in all its bearings. When angry feeling is once engendered, and bad passions brought into play, and the prejudices of nationality stirred up, where will they stop ? Is there not the strongest reason to fear lest they should reach even that authority which, in the highest interests of religion, should ever be an object of love and reverence to the faithful ? My fears may be unfounded, though I am convinced they are not ; and having this

conviction, I know that His Lordship and you will deem me justified in thus expressing them.

The faithful of this Parish are now at peace, and piety prospers amongst them. His Lordship, in the projected change, can propose to himself only the greater good of religion, and some more solid and certain spiritual advantages for the people. Now, very Reverend Sir, if the facts I have stated are not mere suppositions, and the fears I have expressed mere fancies of my own mind, the projected change will not only not confer any new benefit on religion or the faithful, but will seriously hazard the solid and certain advantages of the present state of things. This amalgamation is not a new experiment amongst us. It has been twice tried within our own recollection, and twice signally failed. In the case of St. Ann's Church, the Seminary very earnestly attempted to have services for the two populations, and instruction in their respective tongues. The attempt had to be abandoned after much bad feeling had been created, acts of violence committed at the very doors of the Church, and even open scandal given within its sacred walls. As regards St. Bridget's, His Lordship knows to what extent angry feelings and excited passions were carried. Surely, his Lordship in his zeal for the honor of religion, and the welfare of his flock, will not repeat an experiment that has thus failed, after exciting animosities which are not yet quite forgotten.

If religion, and the best interests of the Catholic people of this Parish, were suffering from divisions and mutual animosities, would not the enlightened charity of His Lordship move him to try every means to bring back harmony and union ; and would he not make any concession within his power to effect that important object ? Now, that harmony and union do exist, is it not wise to preserve them with caution, and not to peril them by changes which His Lordship is at perfect liberty not to undertake ?

It is not in the city of Montreal alone, that the difficulty of amalgamating people of different languages, and different habits, has been felt and admitted. In Quebec, and in every large city of America, where there is a mixture of language, and where the means exist, provision has been made for the religious wants of the people in separate churches. In the United States, as well as in Canada, Bishops and Pastors are convinced that there is no other practical

means of promoting that union and good will, which should bind together all the members of the Church of God. These facts speak for themselves, and need not the help of reasoning.

I shall now, very Reverend Sir, conclude my remarks, by professing my entire obedience and submission to the authority of the Church of God in our Holy Father ; and also my entire obedience to, and reverence for, my Bishop. I declare on the testimony of my conscience, that my only motive in what I have written, is the honor of our holy religion, and the true welfare of our Catholic people.

I have expressed myself fully, because I have felt that a grave danger threatens both ; and, feeling thus, I thought I could not give to my venerated Bishop a more earnest proof of my love and confidence, than to place at His Lordship's service, all the knowledge which over eighteen years, spent in the most intimate relations with our people, may have given me.

I have the honor to be,

Very Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

P. DOWD,

Priest, Director of St. Patrick's Church, Montreal.

OBJECTIONS TO, AND A PROTEST AGAINST the project of dismembering the ancient Parish of Montreal, in order to erect the new Parish of St. Patrick, read in the meeting held in the Sacristy of St. Patrick's Church, on the 8th of November, 1866, to inquire "de commodo et incommodo." The meeting was presided over by the Very Rev. A. F. Truteau, V. G., as *Commissioner of the Bishop* of Montreal.

ST. PATRICK'S, MONTREAL,
November 8, 1866.

VERY REV. VICAR-GENERAL,—In obedience to your public invitation, I beg respectfully to expose through you, to His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal, the following objections to the dismemberment of the ancient parish of Notre Dame de Montreal, and the erection of a new canonical parish attached to St. Patrick's Church. The objections, I make are adopted, and urged on the serious attention of His Lordship, by all the priests who exercise the sacred ministry specially amongst the English speaking Catholics of this city, as their signatures attest.

You will permit me, before proceeding farther, to make one or two observations of some importance. I regret, very Rev. Sir, that for the holding of this meeting, on a subject in which so many thousands are deeply interested, this small sacristy should have been selected, where but few of those desirous of taking part in the proceedings can be present.

You will permit me to make another remark, intended to prevent any misconception of the nature and object of the present inquiry. In deputing you, very Rev. Sir, to hold this assembly for the purpose of ascertaining, from the parties concerned, the advantages and disadvantages—"de commodo et incommodo"—of the projected dismemberment, and the erection of a new parish, His Lordship but complies with the requirements of the law, and the dictates of jus-

tice and equity. All the persons concerned in this important measure are convened here to-day to give such advice to His Lordship as they may believe to be conducive to the general good; and in this view they are required, by law and justice, to expose, for the information of His Lordship, respectfully, but frankly and fully, the reasons for, or against the measure proposed. To neglect doing so would be to expose themselves, and those who may succeed them, to a serious and permanent injury. And to suppose that the proper use of this right could give offence to His Lordship, would be to offer him an indignity.

To-day our Bishop asks us, as the parties immediately concerned, what we think of the project His Lordship places before us?—whether we think that the execution of that project would promote our spiritual interests, or whether, on the contrary, we are convinced that it would inflict serious injuries on those interests? It is the more necessary to give an earnest reply to this demand, as the present is the only opportunity afforded us, whether pastors or faithful, to communicate our views to His Lordship on a question, which, to us, is one of spiritual life or death.

It should also be borne in mind that the dismemberment in question, and the erection of a new parish, are, as yet, only projects submitted to the examination of all persons concerned; and that they are not facts, already decided by competent authority. It follows that the most decided opposition to this dismemberment, and to this new erection, cannot in any way be censured as a resistance to the authority of our Bishop—much less can it be put down as an act of opposition to the Decree of our Holy Father. That Decree gives authority to our Bishop to dismember the ancient parish of Montreal, and to erect as many new parishes as he shall judge necessary—“*necessarias*”—for the spiritual wants of the faithful—“*christi-fidelium indigentis.*” The Decree itself supposes that the power it confers for the erection of new parishes, shall be used to meet the *spiritual necessities of the faithful*, and for no other purpose. His Lordship the Bishop of Montreal, is perfectly free in his action. He is under no command to execute the project in question: he has received an authority, which, in proper circumstances, he is at liberty to exercise—that is simply all.

You, very rev. sir, by the order of His Lordship, have convened

this assembly, composed of those most interested in the dismemberment of the old parish of Montreal, and the erection of the new parish of St. Patrick. His Lordship judged rightly, that the faithful, who should be the first to suffer from any deficiency of spiritual care, and their pastors, who have to render an account of the flock entrusted to them, on the peril of their souls, are the most competent to give him correct information. The question is proposed to them—is there a necessity for the erection of the new parish His Lordship proposes to erect? All answer—No. Is there at least any utility in the proposed erection? Again they answer—No. Do your spiritual interests suffer in your present condition? They answer—No; quite the contrary. Do you require greater facilities for assisting at Mass on Sundays, hearing religious instruction, approaching the sacraments of the Church, receiving the helps of religion in sickness—do you suffer in all, or, at least, in some one of these respects? All answer—No. Priests and people are satisfied. The sufficiency of the present state of things is declared alike in French and in English. All say they want no change. Now, is there any disrespect in all this? Will this emphatic answer of a whole people, replying to their Bishop, according to the deep conviction of their conscience, be put down as an act of rebellion against authority, as a wicked resistance against the Decree of our Holy Father? It would be a sad error, a blind confusion of principles, to say that it should. On the contrary, this united testimony of all interested, the sincerity of which cannot be doubted, should bring a welcome consolation to His Lordship, convincing him, even to evidence, that the *necessity* contemplated by the “Decree” as the only reason for the projected change, did not exist, and consequently, that his conscience was discharged from engaging in a difficult and hazardous undertaking.

Now, very Rev. Sir, let us come to the facts of the case. Not one individual of our whole Catholic population, either French or Irish, petitioned for this dismemberment and erection, spontaneously offered by His Lordship. This singular agreement between people who so seldom agree, is an unanswerable proof that the projected change is universally feared and disliked, and that, too, after the repeated efforts of His Lordship to point out its advantages. But this is not all. No sooner was the official notice of His Lordship’s

intention read from the pulpit, than a universal cry of surprise and grief was raised ; words of complaint passed from mouth to mouth ; and, when time was given to reflect, the moderate and the wise began to ask—What does His Lordship mean ? Surely, he does not wish to destroy religion amongst us, and to bring to ruin the Institutions of Charity, which, at so many sacrifices, we have brought to a state of prosperity for the protection of our destitute orphans and of our virtuous young females ? It is with sincere sorrow I record these things. I suppress much which is too painful to repeat, but which would convince His Lordship still more of the depth of feeling evoked by the announcement of a project as unnecessary, as it is repugnant to the feelings and to the judgment of all concerned.

Now, very Rev. Sir, you can understand the feelings of a priest who sees his people, who a few days ago, loved and venerated their Bishop, as a tender father, thus driven to desperation by having forced upon them a system of things whose necessity no one can understand, and whose expediency every one denies. It would be my choice to remain entirely silent, and to commit the result to God. But would that be my duty ? When the flock is in confusion and danger, that is not the time for the pastor to stand aloof. He should seek a remedy at any risk. It is on this account that I appeal to my Bishop, that, in his charity and wisdom he may again bring back peace and confidence into our midst.

To spare time, I shall not repeat here the observations I thought it my duty to make on the occasion of the erection of St. James' Parish, pointing out some of the evils resulting from the mixture of the two divisions of our Catholic population speaking different languages. I shall, however, request you, very Rev. Sir, to permit me to send, with this paper, a French translation of what I then wrote, for the greater convenience of His Lordship. The observations I then made have lost nothing of their force. Some of the evils I then exposed have already come to pass ; the others will quickly follow.

Some particular facts, confirmatory of my views, have since come to my knowledge. I shall mention one. In Toledo, a populous city of the United States, there is as here a mixture of races and languages. There are German, and Canadian, and Irish Catholics. The Bishop of the Diocese thought, as our Bishop now thinks, that

it would be better to assemble them altogether in the same churches for religious purposes. For a time he persisted in this determination. The result was that a number of the Germans became Protestants, and the greatest portion of them ceased to attend any place of religious worship. At length the Bishop, alarmed at the view of this spiritual desolation, yielded, and permitted the Germans to build a church for themselves. What is now the result? The new German Church is filled with an edifying congregation; and the pastor finds it necessary to build another German Church to accommodate the numbers returning to the practice of religion from indifference or heresy. All this I have learned within the last few days from the lips of the actual pastor of those good Germans.

I may add that it is notorious that thousands of French Canadians, good and pious Catholics at home, fall off from the practice of religious duties, and not unfrequently from the Church, in the United States, because they will not mix with the congregations of the majority, in which a different language is spoken, and different manners prevail. This deplorable fact has been complained of to me repeatedly, by very zealous and enlightened priests. Here are domestic examples of the baneful working of the mixed system, to which, I presume, His Lordship cannot be indifferent. Human nature is the same in all. What has happened in Toledo, and in other parts of the States, to Germans and Canadians, will happen to a greater or lesser extent here to Irish Catholics.

Do violence to their feelings, religious, or national;—take from them what they deem their legitimate rights;—strip them of the accumulated fruits of their piety and generosity, by casting them out of a possession that has been their peaceable right during the last twenty years;—do all this by executing this new project. I will yet guarantee that the children of St. Patrick will not become Protestants; but I will not guarantee that they may not become bad Catholics, indifferent to the practices of religion. Indeed I am convinced that very many would. In acting thus they commit sin; but are they blameless who, without cause, troubled them when they were at peace?

The Archbishop of Quebec wished to amalgamate the two peoples, speaking different languages, together in the same

Churches ; but seeing the evils that resulted, he, like a wise pastor who sought only the true welfare of his flock, separated them, and gave to the chaplain of St. Patrick's Church parochial jurisdiction over all the English speaking Catholics of the City.

The Bishops of the United States, men so learned, so wise and zealous, provide for the wants and desires of their mixed populations, by giving them separate Churches. On every side we see comparatively small numbers of German, Canadian, and Irish Catholics allowed to have separate Churches where they can meet in peace to worship God, without being reminded each time, that they are a minority, and that by right the second place is theirs. The English speaking Catholics of Montreal number about thirty thousand souls. Can His Lordship think it right to force upon them alone this humiliation ?

In this mixed country, both systems—separation and amalgamation—have been tried. The latter has always failed, the former has generally succeeded. Man must be governed not by theories that suppose him to have neither feelings nor weaknesses ; but by practical wisdom that will allow and provide for both. A theory that would do well in heaven, would work very badly amongst men on earth, who still carry about them the frailties of poor human nature.

Two examples have been quoted with a good deal of stress in favor of the mixed system. His Lordship has mentioned the mixed congregations in the Townships and the mixed congregation of the Cathedral in Ottawa City, as satisfactory proofs of the excellence of the mixed system. Now, very Rev. Sir, is it reasonable to compare the few scattered families of the Townships, and the, at most, two thousand English speaking Catholics attending the Ottawa Cathedral, to the thirty thousand English speaking Catholics of Montreal ? But apart from this, I would respectfully ask His Lordship whether the position of even these scattered families is such, in many parishes, as he himself would wish it to be ? No doubt they contribute their full share towards all parochial expenses ; but no one knows better than His Lordship the extent of their spiritual privations.

As to Ottawa, there is at least one Church for the English speaking Catholics in that City already—the Church near the

College ; and another is being erected, to be named St. Patrick's—I believe. This is rather a fair commencement of the separate system even in Ottawa, which is a new place, and in no respect a fit model for Montreal. But His Lordship says that the English speaking Catholics of the Ottawa Cathedral are content with their position,—and here is the proof. The Bishop of Ottawa proposed to them to leave the Cathedral if they desired to do so, and to build another Church for themselves ; and they declined the proposal. Does not this refusal prove conclusively that they are satisfied with the mixed system ? Well for my part I think it does not. But I think it proves quite another thing—viz., that they acted like sensible men who, having contributed their full share towards the building of the Cathedral, thought it would be a little too generous on their part to give up all their rights in it to be enjoyed solely by their French speaking neighbors ; and then politely put their hands into their pockets again to build another Church for themselves. Here is the testimony of a distinguished man just arrived from Ottawa. Instruction is given in French and English on alternate Sundays in the Cathedral. When the Sunday for the French sermon comes, the English Catholics say—“ O ! this is French Sunday, we will stay at home to-day. If these good English speaking Catholics love their religion, they cannot love a system that thus exposes them to violate habitually an important precept of the Church. Be that as it may, I am convinced that the Bishop of Montreal would not desire to see the English speaking Catholics of his Episcopal City give a similar proof of their love for the mixed system, which His Lordship now proposes as a means of improving their spiritual condition.

But, very Rev. Sir, I put it to you, is it fair to compare the mixed system as it exists in Ottawa, with the same system as a thing to be commenced here ? In Ottawa, until lately, the mixed system was a real necessity ; nothing better could have been done. It grew up naturally with the small and poor population of that new place. Whereas in Montreal, to establish the mixed system, branded as a failure in every place where it has been tried, and tolerable only when poverty renders it a necessity ; we have to destroy the separate system, which for long years has been

engrafted on our habits, cherished by our love, and has manifested its own excellence in our midst, by the abundance of its heavenly fruits—peace, harmony, fervent and generous piety.

Have the English speaking Catholics of Montreal abused the separate system in existence amongst them now so many years? Have the faithful—have their pastors been wanting in their duty to the Church—wanting in respect and obedience to their Bishop? How often, on the contrary, have we not been encouraged to go on from good to better, by the fatherly approbation of His Lordship. Surely then our Bishop will not now destroy what has produced so much good, in order to replace it with an order of things which has everywhere been a failure for good, and a fruitful occasion of multiplied evils.

I feel, very Reverend Sir, that I am occupying much of your time. My pain and anxiety at the catastrophe I see menacing the St. Patrick's Congregation must be my claim to your indulgence. I cannot look upon the labor of years about to be destroyed—the monuments of charity raised and sustained by the union of our whole people, about to lose their support—and the people themselves, so long happily collected together under the shadow of their beloved St. Patrick's, about to be driven from his sanctuary, as not belonging to them;—thus bringing back to their memory that they were once before driven from their native land, as if it were not their home;—I cannot see all this, without claiming permission to communicate to my venerated Bishop, in whose hand the easy remedy lies, not only my words, but the very sorrows and fears that oppress my heart. His Lordship, to whom the faithful children of St. Patrick always looked as to a father, will not inflict upon them the cruel blow of a second dispersion. His heart and his religion will forbid it. His heart, for they have suffered enough before finding a happy repose under the shade of St. Patrick's Church; his religion, for in renewing our sufferings, both religion and charity will suffer.

The St. Patrick's Orphan Asylum contains about two hundred and fifty (250) inmates. They are mostly the children of Ireland's exiles. They are the favorite charge of the St. Patrick's Congregation which contributes on an average eight thousand dollars

(£8000) a year for their support. The Institution is prosperous, and is never allowed to be burdened with debt. This creditable state of things is owing to the present condition of the St. Patrick's Congregation. All have a common spirit, under a common direction. They work together as one man, animated by this unity of spirit, and guided by this unity of direction. Thus though comparatively poor, they have been enabled to give to charity sums of money which have earned for them the reputation they so justly possess. Divide the St. Patrick's Congregation, and you destroy all this. Some two thousand Irish Catholics, children and all counted (I believe this is the highest figure), may be found within the limits of the projected parish; the balance of say thirty thousand, will be located in other parishes, and will consequently be strangers to St. Patrick's Church. They will have no common direction, no common spirit—no common action. They will have wants to attend to, and obligations to meet in their respective parishes. In this state of things, where will our poor orphans find eight thousand dollars a year for their support? The decree of erection, that will scatter the St. Patrick's Congregation, will be the death-warrant of the St. Patrick's Orphan Asylum. Yes, its first victims will be the little ones, whom God left fatherless, but whom that decree will leave houseless and friendless in a strange land.

The next victims will be our female servants, and infirm old women;—the one receiving protection for their virtue, the other support in their old age in the St. Patrick's House.

Then, as regards St. Bridget's Refuge, we are now digging out its foundations, and had hoped to complete it next year.—But now I see not how that can be done; and if completed, I see not how it could be supported. The decree will not have to destroy the refuge, for it will effectually stop it at its foundations.

Charitable institutions have always enlisted the cordial encouragement of His Lordship. It is not then possible that we can appeal to him in vain in favor of institutions which we, strangers here, have built out of the sweat of our brow to save the orphan children of our own race from vice and heresy, our young females from temptation, and our aged and infirm from neglect and misery.

I have already alluded to the humiliation and heartburning, to

which the English speaking Catholics will be subjected in the new order of things proposed by His Lordship. Being a minority, they must naturally content themselves to take the second place in the house of God in each of the new parishes. I would appeal to His Lordship, and ask, is this a suitable position for some thirty thousand Catholics, who yield to no other portion of His Lordship's flock in piety, in generous charity, and in respect for, and obedience to their Bishop? The beauty of the churches they frequent, the Institutions of charity they so liberally support, and His Lordship's own memory will attest all this. His Lordship may be convinced, that if the accident of their being less numerous than their brethren who speak French, will be held as a valid reason to give them only a second place in the house of God—a second place in their pastor's care, these thirty thousand English speaking Catholics will never be able to understand that the change in question is for their good, or that it ever could have been intended to afford them by that change greater facilities, than they now enjoy, to approach the sacraments, and to receive religious instruction.

We have one example of the mixed system near us in the Church of the Jesuit Fathers. There, all is done that can be done to remove from the mixed system whatever it has objectionable ; and to recommend it as far as possible to public favor. No person will question this. Yet what is the position of the English speaking Catholics who go there ? It is this—they receive a short instruction at an early mass on Sunday morning ; in the evening they get a sermon at an hour so late that it is neither safe nor becoming for unprotected females to pass home through the streets, after service is over. I say this advisedly, not to blame, or to give pain ; that is far from my intention. But I say it, because the dangers I hint at have actually occurred, and in the worst form ; and again because it exhibits the disadvantages of the mixed system, even under the most favorable circumstances. The most convenient hours must be reserved for the majority ; when they have been well attended to, then all that can be done is done for the unfortunate minority. There is no one to blame for this. If a mixture of two populations speaking different languages must take place, the minority has to stand by, and give place to the majority. This is the natural order of

things : it cannot fairly be otherwise. It is the system that is bad—incurably bad. Religion may struggle for life under it ; but in the mixed system religion can never flourish, from want of its proper nutriment, peace, union of hearts, and union of minds.

Then again, what will become of our religious societies which meet in St. Patrick's on Sunday evenings after Vespers? Will the gift of tongues come with the projected amalgamation? and if not, how find separate places, or separate hours, for the exercises of these numerous societies? It cannot be done in St. Patrick's Church. Would it be for the good of our people to have some of those Societies, from which so many graces flow, suppressed? Would this expedient, the only one I see practicable, advance the spiritual interests of the faithful?

Next comes the difficulty of teaching the catechism to the little ones, and of preparing them for first communion. How are these most indispensable parochial duties to be performed, in St. Patrick's church, in both languages? Perhaps His Lordship might meet the difficulty by sending the French catechism, and preparation for first communion to the Cathedral, or the church of the Jesuit Fathers—both situated within the limits of the projected parish of St. Patrick. The French religious societies might be disposed of in the same way. But if the difficulty be met in this manner, what then becomes of the fundamental motive assigned by His Lordship for the erection of the new parish—viz: that the pastor might have a more immediate supervision over his flock; and the faithful have an easier access to their pastor? This expedient would annul that fundamental motive; for in consequence of it the little ones, whom the sacred canons of the Church give to the pastor as his most tender charge, would be entrusted to strangers, and would grow up without even knowing the voice of their pastors. A sad condition indeed, for a pastor to be obliged to abandon to the care of strangers, a large portion of the children of his parish, and a large portion of the most edifying members of his flock.

I object, very Rev. Sir, to the limits assigned to the projected parish of St. Patrick. More than one half of the territory inclosed within those limits, is occupied almost exclusively by Protestant families. In the remaining portion there is also a large mixture of

Protestants. I believe I am near the truth when I state that the whole Catholic population of the projected parish, French and English speaking—children and all counted, if assembled together would not fill the St. Patrick's Church, as it is filled every Sunday morning at the 8 o'clock Mass. Besides I may fairly suppose that some of even that small number will go to the Cathedral, on the one side, and others will go to the Jesuits' Church, on the other side of St. Patrick's,—what will then remain for St. Patrick's, the parish church, and the second largest in the city? Has His Lorship made this calculation? Surely our Bishop does not wish to reduce St. Patrick's to the solitude of a Protestant cathedral, and to give to our English speaking Catholics, the too painful spectacle of their dear old church deserted, and weeping over the forced dispersion of its pious children.

But will not the Irish Catholics, though living in other parishes, continue to come to St. Patrick's? Yes, they may; but it will be their duty not to desert their own parish churches. The Church desires that parishioners attend at their own parish Churches. And if they will come, they can be received only as strangers. The voice they will hear there, no matter how long they may have been accustomed to listen to it, and to obey it in past years—in the days of peace and happiness—that voice will no longer be the voice of their pastor; he will be a stranger to them, and they will be strangers to him. Very Rev. Sir, are these to be the consoling fruits of the new system, intended for our spiritual advancement?

In the last place I have to object to the erection of the projected parish, that it excludes the immense majority of the present congregation of St. Patrick's Church, and thereby deprives them of their strict rights in justice. They have a strict right to the use of the St. Patrick's Church, because the *Fabrique*, the proprietor of the Church, built it for them;—because after declaring that this was the destination of the Church, the *Fabrique* asked for, and received contributions from the St. Patrick's congregation generally to aid in its erection;—because the Seminary, with the same intention, advanced forty thousand dollars towards the building: and this intention has not been recalled;—because the St. Patrick's congregation in those late years, has expended a further sum of more than

thirty thousand dollars for the completing and ornamenting of their Church ; this is in addition to the amount first subscribed for the building ;—because, with the sanction of the present Bishop of Montreal, St. Patrick's was blessed and dedicated for the English speaking Catholics of the City ;— and finally because the same English speaking Catholics, with the consent of His Lordship, the *Fabrique*, the Seminary, and of all concerned, have been in peaceable possession of St. Patrick's Church, without interruption, from the day it was opened to Divine Service down to the present day—a space of nearly twenty (20) years. These are the grounds on which I claim, as a just right, the use and possession of the St. Patrick's Church for the English speaking Catholics of this city ; and object to the erection of the proposed parish, as a violation of justice, because, by cutting off the immense majority of the said English speaking Catholics from that use and possession, it clearly violates their just rights.

Very Rev. Sir, for all the foregoing reasons I object to, and protest against, the dismemberment of the parish of Notre Dame, for the purpose of erecting the proposed canonical parish of St. Patrick, as defined in your official notice. I am joined in this act by all the undersigned priests. We are moved to take this step, by a most deliberate conviction that the measure proposed by His Lordship would, if executed, injure to a fatal extent the spiritual interests of the devoted people amongst whom we labor. We are not indifferent to the interests of the majority of our Catholic population who speak a language that is not our own. We believe that they too would suffer from the proposed change. We believe that the condition generally of the Catholic people of this city, would not be improved, but on the contrary, made much worse by the execution of that project. We love peace and cordial union amongst all our Catholic people. We have labored long to establish them. We possess that heavenly blessing now. In its name, we reverently implore our Bishop not to proceed with a measure, which no one thinks necessary, which no one has asked for, and which all, or nearly all interested, fear as the harbinger of trouble, of heartburnings, and of scandals. Assure His Lordship of our entire obedience, and of our sincere reverence. Assure him that whatever His Lord-

ship's decision may be, these our dispositions shall not alter ; and that as our Bishop we shall love him to the end, though it should be with broken hearts.

I remain, Very Reverend Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

P. DOWD,
Director of St. Patrick's Church.
J. TOUPIN, Priest S. S.
M. O'BRIEN, Priest S. S.
J. HOGAN, Priest S. S.
M. O'FARRELL, Priest S. S.
JAMES BROWN, Priest S. S.
F. BAKEWELL, Priest S. S.
WM. LECLAIR, Priest S. S.

