

OUR OTTAWA LETTER.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

Ottawa, July 20.

IN THE HOUSE.—Such is the mass of matter before me and around me that I actually know not how to commence a weekly letter. To make matters as intelligible as possible I will divide my letter into two sections. The first part will refer to local matters and religious subjects; I will have to reserve till later what I have to write concerning the political situation. It will be remembered that last week I had foretold startling developments that were to occur even before my letter would be in press. The very next day they came, heralded by the resignation of the Minister of Railways, Hon. Mr. Blair; and they precipitated a state of affairs such as can scarcely be described. As I now write the political atmosphere is still heavy with expectations. This is a day of calm. Tomorrow, or after at latest, a series of Resolutions will be introduced in the House of Commons, upon which the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Bill will be based. Until these Resolutions are in our hands all we can do is to speculate upon the probable outcome of the whole scheme. I am, therefore, forced by circumstances to leave aside for a couple of days—in fact as long as it is possible—this second part of my letter. Between this and the hour of the paper going to press I hope to have sufficient information to enable me to set before the readers of the "True Witness" the situation in all its phases and with every imaginable delight cast upon it. Your correspondent happens to be in an exceptional good place to secure all the most reliable details, and with that impartiality which has ever guided the "True Witness" on all subjects that affect the political situation, I shall attempt to analyze the present as well as forecast the future prospects of the Government in this important crisis. Meanwhile, I take advantage of the lull in the political arena to speak of other events that now absorb public attention at the Capital.

THE POPE'S DEATH.—As I write the flags float at half mast from the spire of the Parliament Building, from the City Hall, and from almost all the public edifices of the city. The bells of the basilica have given the signal, and the steeples of the many churches have taken up the tolling refrain, while across the Ottawa comes the solemn notes of Hull's beautiful chime, and still further off in the distance ring the bells of the Gatineau. It is the announcement to the faithful of that expected, but ever sad news that the Pope is dead. And yet in that chorus of sounds there is an undertone of confidence that blends with the minors of grief it is that confidence which has inspired the Church from the day when first were heard the sublime words, "The Pope is dead, but Peter never dies." Leo XIII. has fulfilled his magnificent mission, he has run his glorious course, he has fought the good fight. In dying he has left his memory and his precept to encourage and to guide his successor, and the Church goes on to the end of time, marching sublimely down the ages, a mystery to the world, an object of adoration in the eyes of God.

His Grace Archbishop Duhamel is absent on a pastoral visitation, but left full instruction what was to be done in the event of the Holy Father's death. The Church bells were to ring for one hour, from five till six in the evening. And these are the bells that now send their notes of sorrow in upon me as I write these lines. On Wednesday, July 22nd, the grand Requiem Masses will be sung in all the churches of the archdiocese. The Apostolic Delegate will preside on Wednesday at the Basilica. Your correspondent now asks for space for the following words of Mgr. Sbarretti, the Apostolic Delegate, who made use of them to-day—Monday—on receipt of the final news of the death of His Holiness:

"Although expecting and fearing to hear of the Holy Father's death at any moment during the past two weeks, the news just received from Rome causes me great sorrow, both personally and as Apostolic Delegate—personally because I have known him well and it is he who has given me on many occasions

proof of his great kindness and condescension, and also on account of close relations between him and my late esteemed predecessor. As Apostolic Delegate because I represent his person and authority. A great loss it is both for the Church and the entire world. His whole life was devoted to the service of God, His Church and his fellow-beings. Under his direction the Church has acquired prestige throughout the whole world. With his master mind he wisely guided the barque of Peter through troubled seas, and drew upon it the respect of all fair-minded men, irrespective of creed or nationality. By the loftiness of his intellect he perceived all the wants of mankind of the present time. In a splendid literary style and with a profundity of thought and largeness of view he applied the principles of Jesus Christ and of His Church to the solution of all the gravest questions that now agitate peoples and nations. In this we cannot but admire the wisdom and the fire of his ardent charity which prompted him to desire and work for the salvation and welfare of humanity."

"If his wise teachings be followed, peace, order, progress, both civil and moral, will reign throughout the world; therefore the Catholic Church mourns a most tender and loving father, the world a most wise counsellor and guide, but whilst we mourn him he is gone to receive and enjoy the reward due to his great virtues and labors."

I need intrude no more on your space concerning this all absorbing question, save to say that nearly every Protestant minister in Ottawa has given expression to views concerning Leo XIII. and his death; and it is a most gratifying thing to be able to say that, while their interviews fill several columns of the daily press, there is not one word or thought expressed that is not in harmony with the sentiments of the Catholic world at this hour. They are unanimous in their kindly opinions of the dead Pontiff, and while each of them declares that he is not in accord with the religious dogma of Rome, still he considers the death of Leo XIII. as the greatest loss this world has sustained in many generations, while the life he has spent has been one of God's most precious gifts to the human race in modern times.

A CATHOLIC HALL.—The officers of St. Joseph's Union, the strong French-Canadian Fraternal Society of Ottawa, have decided to build a splendid new hall on the site of the present one at the corner of York and Dalhousie streets. It is expected that the hall will cost about \$25,000. Ex-Mayor Durocher, grand president, after stating that new branches of the society have been established at Ripon and St. Isidore de Prescott, and others are to be established next week in Beauce County, at St. Evariste, St. Honoré, and St. Sébastien, gave us the following statement concerning the new undertaking:

"The erection of a new hall is made necessary by the growth of St. Joseph's Union, which has been steady and gratifying. When the present hall, formerly a church, was secured, it was considered very commodious. The establishment of many new branches of the order throughout Ontario and Quebec increased business at the headquarters in Ottawa to such an extent however, that the clerical staff had to be increased several times, and the present quarters have become somewhat crowded. Moreover, the strong membership and high standing of the order, made it imperative that a more imposing hall should be erected. The site at the corner of York and Dalhousie streets is a central one, hence the decision to retain it for the new hall."

A FEDERATION.—At a meeting of the St. Jean Baptiste Society on Sunday, the question came up of the best way to gather all the French-Canadians of the Capital under the auspices of that society. On August 1st, 2nd and 3rd next a great demonstration of all the societies of French origin will be held, and the festivities will be on a scale only second to that of Montreal this year. A debate, lasting several hours, took place on a resolution proposing to adopt as the national emblem the flag of the old French monarchy, with a Maltese cross in the centre surmounted with the Sacred Heart and with fleur-de-lis in the corners. By a narrow vote it was decided to defer the matter till later. Some thought it to be too religious a banner for a nationality, while others considered it as being purely Canadian in character and symbolical of the race in Canada as well as of the religion to which they belong.

C. O. F.—Unfavorable though the weather was on Sunday, still the Church parade of the Catholic Order of Foresters was a most creditable demonstration. About 1,300 were in line. These included the local courts and five hundred visiting brethren from Perth, Smith's Falls, Cumming's Bridge, Billing's Bridge, Rockland, Buckingham, Brockville, Carleton Place, Arnprior, Metcalfe, Fallowfield, Moose Creek, Aylmer, Hull and Gatineau Point. The Brook, Clarence Creek.

The delegation from Perth, Brockville, Smith's Falls and Carleton Place came by special trains.

At St. Jean Baptiste Church eloquent sermons were delivered by Rev. Father Gill, O.P., in English, and Rev. Father Harpin, O.P., in French. The preachers spoke of the great advantages to be derived from union, and from membership in such a fraternal society as the Catholic Foresters, and urged them to live up to the principles of the order, by doing which they would be good Catholics and good citizens. Solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given, a beautiful musical service being rendered under the direction of Mr. Amable T. Blay, organist of the Basilica.

VISITORS.—On Monday a special train of the Intercolonial brought about seven hundred excursionists from Beaufort, and Montmorency Falls, in Quebec County, to the Capital. They were under the direction of the Minister of Justice, Hon. Mr. Fitzpatrick, and his secretary, Mr. Verette. They were accompanied by the Mastai bands. They spent the day on the electric cars, visiting the Experimental Farm and other points of interest. And in the afternoon they invaded the House of Commons. They played music in the summer house on the hill, and played all kinds of pranks around the Buildings. They had possession of the place. This makes the second monster excursion, in a month that Hon. Mr. Fitzpatrick has brought to Ottawa. Evidently if he cannot get away from his Parliamentary duties to visit his constituents, he is bound that they shall come and visit him.

Pope of the Holy Rosary

(By An Occasional Contributor.)

Many are the titles which belong to Leo XIII. and now that his precious life has been closed, it may not be untimely to recall one of them—Pope of the Holy Rosary—to which possibly much of his recuperative force can be ascribed. It is certainly little short of a miracle that a man who has passed the ninety-third milestone in life, should sink to the verge of the tomb, hang as it were, over the abyss of eternity, and gather together sufficient spirit and energy to conquer that all-conquering death and return to the ways and activities of men. If such a wonderful change be not ascribed to prayer, and the efficacy of human intercession, then truly has the faith died out in the hearts of people. And if there be one form of prayer more than another which awakened the loving enthusiasm of the Holy Father it was that of the Holy Rosary.

We have but to recall his splendid series of encyclical letters dealing with that grand devotion to form an idea of how truly Leo XIII. confided in the advocacy of the Mother of God. We need not here recapitulate all those touching and loving expressions with which he called upon the faithful throughout the world to honor Mary by the faithful recitation of the Rosary. The arguments that he set forth, drawn from divine teachings, from the story of Mary's own and oft-repeated wishes, from the history of past miracles, and from the logic of theology, constitute a chain-work of reasoning that may not unfittingly be compared to the chain-work of the Holy Rosary itself. When we, also, consider that this is the month of the Holy Rosary, and that in each family the parents and children are expected to practise that lovable devotion daily during this month, we cannot but assume that such millions of Rosaries said for the intention of the good Pope and for his restoration to health, must have been one of the causes of the prolongation of his days, even after all human science would have it that his days were numbered.

Next to the Rosary there is no form of invocation more pleasing to the Blessed Virgin than the Litany.

It is a regular love chant arising from the pious soul, and giving to her every endearing and noble term that the mind of the devout could conceive. And yet, after all the human vocabulary seems to have been exhausted in tender and loving terms wherewith to address the most lovable of God's creatures, Leo XIII. seems to have discovered yet another appropriate expression to be added to that Litany. After calling her mother most amiable, and mother most admirable, he adds thereto the invocation of mother of good counsel. In this city we have a parish dedicated to Our Lady of Good Counsel; and it was Leo XIII. who suggested that term to be applied to her whose whole list of titles are concentrated in that of Mother of God. We, therefore, see how deep and powerful has been the undercurrent of devotion to the Blessed Virgin that has ever swept through the great soul of Leo XIII.

And now that we are in the month of the Holy Rosary, and that "the Pope of the Holy Rosary" is battling for life against an array that few men ever meet, and that fewer still ever succeed in conquering, we should join all our supplications to those of the Church, and especially make use of the Holy Rosary—his form of prayer by predilection—in asking that he be spared for some time longer to direct the ship, to hold the helm, to guide the Church through the winding and dangerous channels that seem to suddenly have been encountered upon her way. And we are confident that if there is any power, under that of God which can restore him to the duties of his august office, it is that power which lies in the invocations of the Holy Rosary.

Diocese of Three Rivers.

CENTENARY CELEBRATION.—

On the fourth of July Mgr. Cloutier, Bishop of Three Rivers, made his entry into the final old parish of St. Narcisse. It was his usual pastoral visitation; but this year a special solemnity was added to the occasion, as the parish celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of its foundation. On Sunday, the 5th July, the good Bishop administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to 200 children of the parish, and that evening left for the parish of St. Timothee. On Tuesday, the 7th July, he returned for the special celebration of the centennial.

The most attractive portion of the ceremonies was a torch-light procession that had all the novelty of antiquity about it. From all ends of the district people flocked to St. Narcisse; the early colonists and founders of the parish were represented in that procession, and the illuminations, bon-fires, music and singing turned the entire region into a veritable fairy land.

On Wednesday morning, at nine o'clock, High Mass was sung by the Bishop, and a most eloquent sermon preached by Rev. Abbe Gerin. The series of addresses delivered by the Bishop, by Dr. Paquette, by Rev. M. P. Gauthier, and the historic lecture by Rev. H. Trudel, all touched upon the story of the parish. It is not often that a Canadian parish celebrates its hundredth birthday, and in the present instance the history of the place is woven into that of Canada and the early missionary struggles. We will, therefore, give our readers a brief account of St. Narcisse.

This parish of St. Narcisse is situated about twelve miles from the St. Lawrence, due north, between the seignories of Champlain and Batiscan. That portion of it which is situated in Batiscan, belonged, when the first colonists came there, to the parishes of Ste. Genevieve and St. Stanislaus; the other part belonged to the parish of Champlain. About the year 1800 some farmers of the surrounding country began to visit the district. The first who are known to have gone there are Collet, of Batiscan, and Norbert and Trepanier, of Ste. Genevieve. But none of these remained. The first real settler who came there was Louis Cosset. It was in 1803 that he left Batiscan to set up his tent. He was born at Ste. Genevieve de Batiscan, the 17th October, 1781. On the 22nd June, 1803, when in his 22nd year, Louis Cosset left his native parish, and axe in hand, and with a small amount of provisions, he penetrated into the forest. He came to a tract of land, now occupied by M. Francois Baril, on the Riviere a la Lime, and there resolved to make himself a future home. After a time, there was a road legislated for, but it was years later when that road was passable. A small chapel was erected on the

very spot where now stands the Church of St. Stanislaus. But only once each month was Mass celebrated by Rev. O. Langlois, parish priest of Ste. Genevieve. This latter parish was used by the pioneer as the basis of his operations, the place whence he drew his provisions. He spent his first winter in Ste. Genevieve, and in 1805 he married a daughter of that parish. Thence forward the work progressed, others followed his example, and soon the place began to be heard of. The family of Louis Henault dit Champagne came there, and settled a few acres from Cosset's place. A couple of years later Francois Lefebvre and Antoine Mongrain, made themselves homes in the same locality. In 1812, Hyacinthe Cosset, a brother of Louis, in 1815, Francois Baril, and in 1818 another of the Cosset brothers, Jeremie, sought their fortunes in this almost unknown region. Thus began the settlement.

The distance from the Church of Ste. Genevieve to the Chapel at St. Stanislaus was about seven miles and a half, and it was a rough road to travel. Not like that of to-day; not like that splendid plank road that leads from Price's Mills down the Batiscan, over which a carriage or a buckboard can travel as easily as a parlor car on the track.

When Cosset set up his tent in the wilderness, in 1802, and built his chapel, the priest, Rev. M. Langlois was the second parish priest of Ste. Genevieve. Rev. Mr. Aubry had been the first one—he was appointed in 1786; in 1805 Rev. Mr. Dorval succeeded Rev. Mr. Langlois; then came Rev. Mr. Le Bourdais, in 1812; from 1813 to 1815 it was Rev. Chas. Hob; and from 1815 to 1862, Rev. F. X. Cote.

We cannot well enter into all the details of the history of this interesting parish. But in 1851 it was canonically erected. It was carved out of the two parishes of Ste. Genevieve and St. Stanislaus, and had for its first priest Rev. Mr. P. Patry. On the 14th June, 1851, Mgr. P. F. Turgeon, Archbishop of Quebec, placed the new parish under the patronage of St. Narcisse, Confessor and Pontiff, whose feast is celebrated on the 29th October. Mgr. Cook, then Vicar-General and parish priest of Three Rivers (afterwards Bishop of that diocese), selected the site for the Church and marked out the limitations of the parish. On the 15th December, 1851, fifty years ago, the first Mass was celebrated in the new Church, by Rev. F. X. Cote, of Ste. Genevieve. In 1854, the presbytery was built. In 1855 the boarded of wardens was elected. One elementary school was built in 1856, and another in 1858. Finally, in 1859, by proclamation of the Governor of Quebec the parish was civilly erected. To-day they have four schools; the population comprises about 1,400 souls, and there are 6,000 acres of land under cultivation there.

Such is a brief history of this now prosperous Catholic parish, the hundredth anniversary of which has been celebrated with so much pomp and enthusiasm. We have translated most of this information from a splendid special number of the "Tribune," the local organ of Three Rivers.

And the writer takes a special delight in transcribing these few lines for, while so doing, he travels in memory again, over those very roads, which "twenty golden years ago" knew his presence well; and he conjures up scenes and events so intertwined around his heart that they still and forever will form part of his life. He can see again the churches of Ste. Genevieve and St. Stanislaus, and the cemetery beyond the latter, and there are buried memories that arise, and faces that reappear, which the passage of time, and the coldness and hollowness of life's joys and cares, cannot wipe out from the recollection. And there are others, still living, but far from those memory-haunted scenes, who come back again, for the span of years is leaped in a single bound, the hopes and ambitions, the aerial castles and fond aspirations, that had all their foundations away up in that northern region, revive, glow and fling a delusion of momentary happiness upon the one who sits alone, and thinks, and writes.

The simple faith, the honest toil, the noble sacrifices that line the history of St. Narcisse, of the parishioners, past and present, are worthy a place in the archives of the land.

SCOTLAND'S CANAL.

The plans for the construction of a ship canal between the Firth of Forth, on the east of Scotland, across to the River Clyde, on the west, have been definitely arranged. The canal will cost \$50,000,000. One of the great engineering features of the scheme will be the carrying of the canal through the high ground near the Loch Lomond end.

FEAST OF ST. ANN.

(By an Occasional Correspondent.)

To-morrow, Sunday, 26th July, the Church celebrates the feast of St. Ann, the glorious Mother of Our Blessed Lady. It is, in consequence, a day of special rejoicing for all Catholics, and for none more than the devoted servants of Mary. We are reminded, from year's end to year's end, of all that we owe to the Blessed Virgin, and there scarcely passes a day that in some manner she is not honored, for she was the most privileged of human beings, the most perfect, the most spotless. And, moreover, she is the most powerful of all the advocates that our race has in heaven. Her power is based upon the great privilege which she enjoys as the Mother of Christ. His filial love for His earthly mother is the key wherewith she can open the treasure-house of graces, when in response to those who have faith in her and who invoke her with confidence, she begs that assistance in need of which her servants so badly stand.

On the same principle that Christ's love for His mother is a fountain of blessings for us, so Mary's love for her own mother—St. Ann—is also a source of untold blessings. It is thus that the devoted lovers and servants of St. Ann reach the Divine Spring of all celestial benefactions. She pleads with her daughter; the daughter pleads with her own Son, and the chain of prayer and of response is complete in its every link.

It is but natural that the Son of God would take into account the love of Mary for her mother and confer on that mother powers and privileges, beyond the ordinary. And that such is the case, we have not to go beyond the limits of our own province, we have here the most irrefutable testimony of the influence, the affection, the miracle-working strength of this great saint. In glancing over the names of the different parishes in Quebec, we find not less than twenty that are specially under the protection of St. Ann. One of the leading Irish Catholic parishes of our own city is that which bears the name of St. Ann. Down at Beaufort, there in the heart of the Laurentians that skirt the St. Lawrence, a majestic towers to heaven and in a perpetual sermon in stone preaches the glories of this maternal saint. But more eloquent than all other forms of expression, be they of sculpture, architecture, painting, music, or words, are the processions of pilgrims, from all ends of the continent, that perpetually wend their ways to the shrine of St. Ann. The evidences of the physical cures operated, miraculously through her intercession, are there out of number. But if those physical cures are almost too numerous to be recalled, it were as easy to count the stars in the sky as to enumerate the miracles of a spiritual character that have been wrought in hearts and souls by the wonderful influence of Good St. Ann. We might, therefore, say that our province rests, as it were, under her special protection. It has been a section of the world upon which she has gazed with particular predilection. We, then, are bound in a manner far more strongly than are other people to honor St. Ann on the occasion of her annual feast. And this year it comes on a Sunday a day when all Catholics have a particular opportunity of leaving aside all thoughts of worldly cares and occupations, and of allowing their souls to enter fully into the spirit of the Church.

We learn with deep pleasure that the amount of pilgrims to the shrine of St. Ann have never before been as great as during the present season. It is evident that the spirit of devotion amongst our people, instead of dying out, or being dwarfed by interests and occupations of a purely material character, has increased in fervor and is as powerful now, if not more so, as ever it was. To-morrow, then, all who have faith in Our Lord's love for His Mother, and Mary's love for her mother, will find an inspiration to honor in a befitting manner Good St. Ann.

FAMILY PEW.

Every family, every unmarried young man and woman should own a pew or at least a seat in their parish church.