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TOPICS OF AN OLD-TIMER

Another Remarkable Chicago Irishman—Hon. William J. Onahan, Recipient of Papal Honors—A Great Scrap-Book Maker—Mr. Matthew Teefy, of Richmond Hill, a Similar Preserver of Many Old Canadian Newspapers and Documents—Wm. Jarvis and Peter Perry—An Irish-Canadian Address to Queen Victoria in 1838—Mr. Teefy's Family—A Characteristic Anecdote of Sir John A. Macdonald—An Anecdote of Hon. Richard Lalor Shiel.

One of the most remarkable Irishmen in Chicago and one of the best known in the United States, is Mr. William J. Onahan, who has resided now over fifty years in that city and has participated in many events there and filled many public positions of responsibility and trust. In some respects he is a good deal similar to our Mr. Matthew Teefy of Richmond Hill, as he is of a literary turn of mind and likes to preserve records of events transpiring in his life-time, and it has been said that the history of the United States could be written out of the scrap books that he has made. He once exhibited to me a number of those books, all made alike, bound alike and put together with a uniformity that was remarkable. The Chicago Post of a recent date has an article on this predilection of Mr. Onahan, which I will refer to further on. Mr. Onahan has been honored by one of those later medals presented by the University of Notre Dame, as a mark of distinction conferred on eminent American Catholics for services to the Church and to society. Mr. Onahan has been engaged in many movements for the benefit of his fellow countrymen and cordillionists, beginning with the colonization movement inaugurated by the late Hon. Thomas D'Arcy McGee, some fifty years ago. Those who know will remember that Mr. McGee looked upon the State of Illinois as a very favorable field for Irish emigration, when he wrote a poem entitled "The Happy Homes of Illinois." Mr. Onahan, too, has taken great interest in the cause of temperance in which he has ever been an enthusiastic worker among his fellow countrymen. His pen, too, has been very extensively engaged on Irish and Catholic subjects and the press of Chicago looks upon him as an authority to be consulted when any of its members are in search of concise and correct information. Mr. Onahan is now a widower and if I am not mistaken, his wife was a native of Toronto, and I have an idea that I remember her when she was a little girl, bright and fair. At any rate she is now of happy memory and was well beloved by all who knew her.

Mr. Onahan for several years past has made an annual trip to the land of his birth and I believe has already taken his departure for this year's journey. This summer the trip is to be extended to Rome, where Mr. Onahan expects to have an audience with Pope Pius X., who has just renewed an honor bestowed upon him by Pope Leo XIII. This, the highest awarded to lay members of the Church, is that of *Causiriche Segreto di Cappella*, which, when translated, means "Private Chamberlain with cap and sword," and carries with it the right to the title of Count and the entrance to the Vatican. Mr. Onahan is one of the most influential lay members of the Church in America, and was first given the honor on account of the notable work he performed in organizing the Columbian Catholic Congress, which met during the

World's Fair in Chicago in 1893. Up to that time he had the honor of having organized the first Catholic Congress for laymen held in the United States—that of 1889 in Baltimore.

The decoration which came with the testimony of the order is an elaborate one of gold and garnets. A gold medallion of the Pope accompanied it. He remarked to a press representative in Chicago several weeks ago: "If I have the honor of an audience with the Holy Father this summer it will be the first time I have ever been received. I never saw Pope Leo until after his death. I was one of those in the procession who carried his body from the Vatican to St. Peter's. I never have seen the present Pope, as I left Rome just before he was elected."

But to return to Mr. Onahan's scrap books. Mr. Onahan may possibly make a printed volume out of his scrap book. He has more than one hundred volumes of clippings, which he has been preparing and preserving for years. "I have," said he, "made one scrap book each year for almost forty years. In addition I have made scrap books on various subjects. I think the history of Chicago for the last fifty years could be written from these. I believe I have in them much information which never has been put in permanent form and in time will be forgotten as the older generation passes away." Many annalists and seekers of knowledge of the past go to Mr. Onahan for information, which he is happy to supply, information that cannot be found at any other source.

The latter statement is also true of Mr. Matthew Teefy of Richmond Hill. The two gentlemen seem to have tastes much alike and are fond of preserving records. In a "History of York County," published in the year 1885, I find the following reference to Mr. Teefy's collection of rare and interesting Canadian documents which I had the pleasure of looking through and examining for myself and which have long since become historical:

"There are several spots in the village (Richmond Hill) which are of special interest to students of our local history and topography. Not the least interesting of these is the office

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of Mr. Teefy, the village postmaster, which is situated on the west side of the main street, in a central and convenient locality. Mr. Teefy is the gentleman already referred to as the clerk and treasurer of the village corporation. He is an enthusiastic archaeologist and antiquarian, and probably knows more of the history, topography, traditions and folk lore of Richmond Hill and its neighborhood than all the rest of the inhabitants put together. He is a gentleman upwards of three score years of age, but his physical and mental vigor are those of one in the prime of life, and he presents the appearance of a man of forty or forty-five. He has been postmaster for thirty-four years, having been appointed to that position in 1859. He has also been a magistrate for a period of thirty-one years, and has during all the interval been one of the most popular and useful citizens.

"His private office is immediately to the rear of the post-office, and is crammed full of objects of interest. In the centre of the room is his desk, from which he dispenses magisterial justice. The wall to the right is lined with volumes of the Dominion and Provincial Statutes and other law books and works for technical reference. Another side of the room is largely taken up with files of the "Colonial Advocate" and other rare old Canadian newspapers which long since have been practically unprocurable. Around, set in suitable frames, are various old documents, the sight of which is eminently calculated to gladden the heart of any one sufficiently versed in Canadian history to

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know their value. Conspicuous among them is a printed address from Mr. William Jarvis, dated "ork, 14th July, 1800." Mr. Jarvis was for many years Provincial Secretary for Upper Canada and was the gentleman referred to elsewhere in this volume as having been sharply admonished by Lieut.-Governor Peter Hunter for neglect of duty. The document now under consideration is addressed "To the Free and Independent Electors of the Counties of Durham, Simcoe and the East Riding of York." It sets out that Mr. Jarvis will be a candidate for their suffrage at the ensuing election; that he has not relinquished his intention of so doing, and that all reports to that effect are utterly unfounded.

"Next, we find a framed broadside issued as an advertisement by Peter Perry, dated at Whitby, on the 20th of December, 1841. Most readers of these pages doubtless have some knowledge of Mr. Perry. "From forty to fifty years ago," says the author of "The Canadian Portrait Gallery," "there was no name better known throughout the whole of Upper Canada; and in Reform constituencies, there was no name more potent wherewith to conjure during an election campaign. Peter Perry was closely identified with the original formation of the Reform Party in Upper Canada, and for more than a quarter of a century he continued to be one of its foremost members. During the last ten or twelve years of his life he was to some extent overshadowed by the figure of Robert Baldwin, whose lofty character, unselfish aims, and high social position combined to place him on a sort of pedestal. But Peter Perry continued to the very last to be an important factor in the ranks of his party." He died at Saratoga Springs, New York, on the 24th of August, 1851. At the time when he issued the broadside which hangs framed in Mr. Teefy's office, he kept a general store at Whitby, originally named "Perry's Corners."

"We next come to a framed address from the Irish inhabitants of Upper Canada to the Queen, printed in 1838. It is headed "Erin go Bragh!" and deplores the recent rebellion, at the same time avowing the loyalty of the Irish inhabitants.

"Mr. Teefy also has a number of volumes of rare and unprocurable pamphlets, concerning which it is not an exaggeration to say that they are worth their weight in gold. But space fails to describe the multifariousness of the way objects which are here exhibited. Any one who feels specially interested in the matter should call on Mr. Teefy and see them for himself."

I believe that Mr. Teefy and Mr. Onahan are about the same age, but Mr. Teefy is still in harness as postmaster and is the oldest person holding a similar position in the Dominion of Canada. It is only a few months ago that he resigned the municipal offices of village clerk and treasurer. He was then presented with an address and a gold-headed cane. He came to Canada with his parents when quite young, from the County of Tipperary, Ireland, and learned the printing trade in Toronto in the thirties. Mrs. Teefy, the wife of this distinguished Canadian Irishman, is yet alive. They are the parents of the Rev. Dr. Teefy, the talented Catholic divine of Toronto. Another son is a barrister in Chicago, whom "Old Timer" has met; and another son is a banker in Stockton, California. They have several daughters, too, one of whom is the wife of a well-known merchant of Orillia, Ont., and another is her father's assistant in the Richmond Hill post-office. A third daughter, I understand, is the wife of a professional gentleman in one of the new North-western cities. They are all talented and thriving and present very creditable records. I wish we had many more Irish Canadian families like this one.

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The following anecdote of the late Sir John A. Macdonald is now going the rounds of the American press and it is exactly like what Sir John would do and say under the circumstances:

"The late Sir John Macdonald, Premier of Canada, one evening was present at a public dinner at which he was expected to deliver a rather important speech. In the conviviality of the occasion he forgot the more serious duty of the evening, and when at a late hour he rose, his speech was by no means so luminous as it might have been. The reporter, knowing that it would not do to print his notes as they stood, called on Sir John next day and told him that he was not quite sure of having secured an accurate report. He was invited to read over his notes, but he had not gone far when Sir John interrupted him with, "That is not what I said." There was a pause and Sir John continued, "Let me repeat my remarks." He then walked up and down the room and delivered a most impressive speech in the hearing of the amused reporter, who took down every word as it fell from his lips. Having thanked Sir John for his courtesy, he was taking his leave when he was recalled to receive this admonition: "Young man, allow me to give you this word of advice: Never again attempt to report a public speaker when you are drunk."

This has reminded me of an anecdote I once read of Hon. Richard Lalor Shiel at the Irish state trials in 1844, when Daniel O'Connell and other "travellers" were tried for treason. Shiel was counsel for one of the prisoners. The reporters wanted to get a report of his speech before it was delivered. It was a very long speech and full of legal technicalities. It was printed in full in a little paper published in Hamilton, Ontario, called "The Liberal," shortly after its delivery. What I want to show is the wonderful memory of the man, just like that of our own T. D. McGee. Mr. Shiel took the reporters into his parlor and delivered the speech for them there and they took it down in shorthand. When the great speech was afterwards delivered in Court the reporters had their notes previously taken down before them. It was delivered precisely word for word as he gave it to them in private and there were no alterations to make. But it was not Shiel's failing to get drunk and then accuse the reporters of taking his place.

WILLIAM HALLEY.
Rev. Bernard Vaughan, Censor

Many people outside the sphere of his own church are grateful to Father Bernard Vaughan for his vigorous denunciation of the vices and follies of the "smart set." Such forcible utterances, as have been delivered in Farm street on recent Sundays are the more welcome because sermons are too rarely related to the life of the day. The empty and often vicious lives of our idle rich are a fit theme for burning indignation in the preacher. It is an ignoble existence meriting contempt as much as indignation. Of all men and women, the votaries of pleasure are the less happy. Carlyle wrote with insight when he extolled the lot of those who have to work in order to eat, compared with that of those who are not under that blessed compulsion. It is a consoling reflection that the "smart set" does not mirror the nation. But the prevalence of a low conception of marriage is not limited to the luxurious classes. Roman Catholicism has rendered an inestimable service to Christian civilization by its attitude toward marriage, and Father Vaughan's eloquent protest against the habit of regarding lightly the most sacred of all human ties, is in harmony with the best traditions of his church.—London Mail.

DR. SLAVEN'S DEATH

The Passing Away of One of Orillia's Leading Men

In addition to the notice published in our issue of last week regarding the late Dr. Slaven of Orillia, we are happy to publish the following tribute from the Orillia Packet:

Notwithstanding his long and serious illness, it was with something of a shock that the town learned on Saturday evening that Dr. Slaven had passed away. His friends had never given up hope that he might be sufficiently restored to get about once more.

Few have taken a more active part in various phases of the making of Orillia, during forty years, than John Wallace Slaven. Born near Picton, in the County of Prince Edward, this province, in 1834, he came to Orillia in 1862, and established his first drug store on the site of the present post office. That business is still carried on at the stand then known as King's corner, by the eldest son of the founder, Mr. R. R. Slaven.

From the first, Mr. Slaven identified himself with the interests of the then small village, as a member of the Mechanics' Institute, the Township Council, and other public activities. After the village was incorporated, he was Councillor and Deputy Reeve, and in 1889 and 1890 he was Mayor of the town. He also took an active interest in educational matters, was Chairman of the Separate School Board for a long term of years, and was a member of the Collegiate Institute Board up to the time of his death, having also filled the Chairmanship of that body. He also had been for several years a member of the Board of Health—in fact never and however he could serve Orillia, the County, or his country, he manifested a readiness to do so. It was during his term as Mayor that the grant for the present post office was secured, and he twice visited Ottawa, as well as devoting considerable time to that object, and also the securing of a custom's office for Orillia. Another public act which gave Dr. Slaven much gratification during his second year as Mayor was the securing of Royal Humane Society medals for two of the Panna Indians, John Wesley and Charles Nanjushking, for the rescue of James Jackson from drowning in the Narrows. Dr. Slaven had always been a warm friend of the red man, and at the time the medals were presented Chief Benson marked their appreciation of the interest the Doctor had taken in them, by making him an honorary chief of the Ojibways, an unusual honor. His Indian designation was Nah-wah-quah-kee-zig-Ogeemah, literally Big Man in the Middle of the Day, or Noonday Chief. A Conservative in politics, he was many years Chairman of the East Simcoe Liberal-Conservative Association, and in 1882 was chosen to contest the riding for the Legislature against Mr. Charles Drury, but was defeated after a spirited contest. Prior to the downfall of the Conservative Government in 1896, he was promised the first vacancy in the Senate in this section of Ontario. In religion he was a devout and consistent Roman Catholic. In 1892 he was elected a Vice-President of the Ontario College of Pharmacy, and at the expiry of his term declined the Presidency, for business reasons.

In 1866, when Fenian filibusters invaded this country, he was one of the first to volunteer, offering his services as a private in the company then formed at Orillia, and since known as No. 7, of the 35th Regiment, Simcoe Foresters. He was given a commission and went to Thorold with the Company in October of that year. He attended the military school to qualify himself for military command, and on the retirement of Captain Darling became Captain of the Company, and to the last never ceased to take an interest in its welfare. The present, we believe, is the only year since his retirement that he failed to meet "old No. 7" on its return from camp, and his cheery words of welcome and commendation were appreciated by every member of the Orillia detachment—past or present. Though confined to bed last June, when the volunteers returned, he sent a short letter, signifying his desire to be with them if he could.

In 1867 Dr. Slaven married Miss Margaret I. McDonell, daughter of the

late Alexander McDonell, Esq., of Glengarry, who survives him, with two sons, Robert Ramsay Slaven of Orillia, and Dr. Alex. J. Slaven, Dayton, Ohio, and three daughters, Mrs. E. F. Doty, of Merchantville, N.J.; and Misses Lillian and Laura Slaven of Orillia. Dr. Slaven himself was the second of a family of ten sons, of whom only three now survive—the eldest, Mr. Thomas H. Slaven, of Paicines, California; Mr. Milo Slaven, of Buffalo, who attended the funeral; and Mr. Fred. Slaven, of Picton. An only sister, Miss Mary Slaven, of Picton, also survives.

The funeral was a striking tribute of public esteem, being largely attended by the business and professional men of the town. The service was held in the Church of the Angels Guardian, where High Mass was celebrated by the Rev. Father Moyna, assisted by the choir. The church was crowded, a large proportion of those present being Protestants. The town council and the collegiate institute board attended as corporate bodies. His colleagues on the latter body also sent a beautiful wreath. At the conclusion of the Mass, Father Moyna gave a short address. It was unusual, he said, to preach a sermon at a Roman Catholic funeral, but in this case, he thought some departure from the usual custom would be justified. They were gathered round the bier of a good citizen. In private life he was an affectionate husband and a firm friend. His gentleness was proverbial, and his love for the children was pleasant to see, and was most heartily reciprocated, as was shown by the number of anxious enquiries made for him by boys and girls during his last illness. In this he was following in the footsteps of the Master. In religion, Dr. Slaven was tolerant, but he did not carry his toleration to the point of indifference, as too many did. He was firm in his own convictions, and held strongly to them, though he respected the right of those who differed from him in their opinions. This was true toleration. In his life as a citizen, he took his full share in the work of the state. The members of the Church were deeply indebted to him in particular for his long services on the Separate School Board. In short he rendered unto Caesar the things that were Caesar's, and unto God the things that were God's.

A long cortege followed the remains to their last resting place in the Roman Catholic cemetery. The pallbearers were Sheriff Harvey, Messrs. E. B. Alport, T. Mulcahy, J. O. Perry, J. B. Marston and John Regan. The body was consigned to the grave with military honors, accorded by a squad from No. 7 Company, under command of Captain Grant and Lieutenant Eaton.

Missions in the Congo Free State

Catholics who are in sympathy with the great work of the Church in Africa and in the welfare of the Congo Free State may be interested in the convention which has been concluded between the Holy See and the Congo Government for the encouragement of missions and the advancement of Catholicity and civilization in Central Africa.

The Holy See and the Congo Free State have entered into an agreement for the furtherance of missionary work in Africa. In accordance with this convention, the Congo Government grants each Catholic mission from 250 to 500 acres of land in fee simple and provides also, in certain cases, a stipend for the missionary in charge. The Church, on its part, agrees to establish new schools for the natives, especially agricultural and manual training schools.

The preamble of the convention sets forth that: "The Holy Apostolic See, being desirous of encouraging the systematic diffusion of Catholicism in the Congo, and the Government of the Congo Free State, appreciating the important part taken by the Catholic missionaries in the work of civilizing Central Africa, have made an agreement between themselves and with the representatives of the Catholic missions in the Congo for the purpose of still further assuring the realization of their respective intentions."

Then follow the nine articles of the convention, signed on the part of the Holy See by Monsignor Vico, Apostolic Nuncio, and on the part of the Congo Free State by the Chevalier de Cuvellier, Secretary-General of the Department of Foreign Affairs.



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