

ST. MARY'S CHURCH.

A MOST ELOQUENT SERMON BY REV. FATHER QUINLIVAN, S. S.

The Apostolates of the Word, of Prayer and of the Press—A Magnificent Plea for Catholic Journalism—High Praise for "The True Witness."

On Sunday last a most interesting event took place in the elegant church of Our Lady of Good Counsel (St. Mary's parish), when the Rev. Father Quinlivan, parish priest of St. Patrick's delivered a powerful sermon on the Apostolate of the Press. High Mass was sung by the curate, Rev. Father Shea, and after the Gospel the kind pastor of St. Mary's, Rev. Father O'Donnell, ascended the pulpit and, having made the regular announcements of the week, informed the congregation that Father Quinlivan, of St. Patrick's would address them upon a very important subject. For fully an hour the able preacher held the attention of the large congregation while delivering a most powerful and lucid address.

In opening, the Rev. Father said that he had come at the kind invitation of Father O'Donnell to say a few words on a matter that concerns the common interests of all the Catholics of the city, and particularly of the five great English-speaking Catholic parishes. We are about to enter the month of October, which is one specially consecrated to prayer, and in a particular manner to the grand devotion of the Holy Rosary. The Holy Father calls upon the Catholic world to join in the beautiful prayers of the Rosary, that through them the interests of the Church, all over the earth, may be protected and the noble mission of Christ's Vicar rendered successful and triumphant. The present Sovereign Pontiff is certainly one of the very greatest of the Popes. The unexpected good he has done surpasses all language to describe. Shorn of his temporal authority and power, he has merely the spiritual weapon wherewith to combat. Yet he has done more than any man in this century. He has won the respect and the admiration of even his enemies. He has solved problems that have puzzled the brains of the world's greatest statesmen; and on his simple affirmations more value is set to-day than upon the expressions of the greatest men of the age. He combines with his natural and magnificent gifts the supernatural light that comes to him as the custodian of the Faith that Christ left us. We know, and the world knows, all that he has accomplished, all that he is now accomplishing, and all that he intends to accomplish for the good of humanity and the glory of God. He has turned his eyes to the Orient and is moving rapidly in the direction of securing a union between the schismatics of the East and the parent body of the Church. Mighty results are expected to follow each of his undertakings and every sincere Catholic in the world is hopeful of success, because we all feel that a great master is at the helm.

But while so much is being done by the Pope, we must all aid in the ground work. From the highest to the lowest, from the richest to the poorest, in all stages of life, in every walk of existence, the Catholic can have a share in the great undertakings of Leo XIII. By the prayers of the Holy Rosary each individual can aid in the work, and particularly does our Holy Father recommend that weapon. When future historians record the triumphs and troubles of the Church, not improbably will the present Vicar of Christ be known as

"THE POPE OF PRAYER."

Prayer is his weapon; it is the double-edged sword that he wields, it is also his shield in the hour of struggle. Therefore, is it in our power, no matter how ignorant or learned we may be, how old or how young, to further the aims of the grand apostolic Pontiff that to-day so glorious reigns over the kingdom of Christ on earth. It is by means of a triple apostleship that he seeks to bring about the greatness of the Church's future. That is the Apostolate of the Word, that of Prayer, and that of the

Press. It is specially upon the last one we will dwell—for it has a particular interest for us—but a word or two about the first and second will be in harmony with the subject.

When Christ established His Church He selected a few poor and ignorant fishermen to go abroad and commence the Apostolate of the Word, to evangelize the nations, to convert the universe. Look to-day at the stupendous effects of their labors, the mighty triumphs they gained, the astounding results of their mission. St. Peter alone converted 8,000 people by his first and second sermons. See the Apostolate of the Word as exemplified in the labors of St. Francis, of St. Dominic, and of the other wonderful preachers whom God raised up, from time to time, according as the ages required them. It is by the announcing of the Word of God from the pulpits of the world that the truths of our holy religion have been spread abroad and that they are kept alive in the breast of humanity.

The second, and perhaps even more important Apostolate is that of Prayer. It existed even before that of the Word. The early apostles were taught to pray before preaching, and in turn taught that prayer was absolutely necessary. Behold the grand part that each of us can play in this work of the Church! We are told of a great pulpit orator who charmed thousands by his matchless eloquence and who drew hosts of converts to the Church. Everyone attributed his success to the magic of his language and his influence upon the people. But it was soon after revealed to a holy person, that the conversions were not due to the powerful oratory of the preacher, but to the prayers of an humble brother, who sat upon the pulpit steps and repeated the Ave Maria during the sermons. The brother prayed that the word of God might have effect, and his prayer was answered. So is it that the prayers of the humblest individuals in the congregation may do as great a work of Apostleship as the powerful eloquence of the grandest preacher. But while we have the Apostolate of the Word in the pulpit, and of Prayer the world over, there is another—a third kind of Apostolate that has become, in recent years, of the utmost importance in the grand work of the Church, and the encouragement of which the Holy Father misses no opportunity of securing; it is

THE APOSTOLATE OF THE PRESS.

We have it not only from experience, but upon the highest of authority that the press to-day is a great power for good or for evil, just as it is applied. In his encyclical the Holy Father dwells upon the importance of the press in the great struggle now going on. He calls upon the prelates of the Church and the members of the clergy to encourage the Catholic press as a necessary arm in the arena of combat. So much so is it that Bishops have found it advisable to take certain priests—who have an aptitude for literary work—and to place them at the heads of Catholic papers. It may be well considered a work so necessary that it belongs to their apostolic mission. The congregation knows well to what this allusion is made. In this country, and in this province, particularly in this city, the people are divided into three principal elements, each of which is obliged to look after its own special interests. This classification, or division of elements is not of our making, no one is to blame for it, we are simply obliged to accept the cold facts as they exist. It is, therefore, not for any purpose of creating further divisions, but rather to show that since in the order of things they exist, we must take them as they come, that reference is now made to them. We have the Protestant, the French-Canadian, and the English-speaking Catholic elements in our community. We belong to that last mentioned section, which is very numerous, yet in a considerable minority. We must share the fate of our section, we depend upon each other, and unless we are perfectly united we have neither influence nor hope. If we become divided into parishes, or into sub-sections of any kind, it is twenty to one against our ever getting any recognition at all. The other two elements have all that they require; they have the Press, they have the wealth to support it; they keep together whenever their common interests are at stake. The Protestant section possesses four powerful dailies, that both morning and evening defend their rights and keep their claims before the public and before the powers that be. The French-Canadian section has not less

than five solid dailies to battle for their rights, and to their credit be it said that they have recently set on foot a thorough Catholic daily, La Croix, that has received a special blessing from the Pope. When Canon Racicot asked for that Apostolic blessing, the Pope's face lit up and he exclaimed that he gave it with all his heart. A daily Catholic paper he considers one of the greatest blessings to the world. Thus are the two sections defended and thus do they support the instruments of their success.

What have we to show? Not a single daily paper, and only one weekly. But that weekly—THE TRUE WITNESS—has gained for itself of late years a most honorable reputation, not only in Canada but over the whole continent. The American press, when quoting from its columns, or commenting upon its work, unanimously calls it

A MODEL CATHOLIC JOURNAL.

Every reference to our paper—and they are of weekly occurrence—are most complimentary. Yet we have people so short-sighted and so little given to reflection that they make a pretext of the paper being "only a weekly" to hold aloof from its proper support and due encouragement. "Half a loaf is better than no bread," the man who has lost an arm still thanks God that he has the other left to be of use to him. If we cannot purchase a gun wherewith to meet our opponents let us not for that reason cast away the blackthorn in our hand. Yes, some people would allow our weekly to drop; but how can they ever expect a daily paper if they cannot support a weekly? and how can they hope to build up a daily if we tear away the solid foundation of the weekly?

In the first place the disappearance of our weekly would be a source of deep humiliation—a real disgrace. What would strangers think of us? The news goes abroad that THE TRUE WITNESS is dead. "What,"—they will say—"that grand, old Catholic organ has been allowed to disappear! What is wrong? Are the 35,000 Irish Catholics too poor to keep life in it? It had never been more powerful, never more needed, never so hopeful; what is the cause?" The answer would simply be, "it died on account of apathy." Would that be to our credit? In Ontario, in a Protestant province, they support four good Irish Catholic weeklies; and any one of the communities in which they flourish is by far inferior in numbers to ours. We are of that old and pioneer Catholic settlement from which have radiated on all sides the lights of our faith, and we have not the spirit to keep up our only mouth-piece—and such a splendid paper. It is the oldest in Canada of its class; and it is from its columns many a cherished principle of faith was gleaned by the youth of the past, and it is in its columns that the grandest truths are most powerfully expressed for the people of to-day. No one ever read its pages carefully that did not feel the better for it. (We purposely omit the remarks of the Reverend Father concerning the editor; it is the paper and not the editor that is of moment to our people.)

The death of such an organ would be destructive of our very best interests. It is the

ONLY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE APOSTOLATE OF THE PRESS

that we possess. Other Catholic papers are good, no doubt, but they have no local interest for us, nor do they, nor can they, represent our special interests, no matter how well edited they may be. Without THE TRUE WITNESS our commercial, social, personal educational and other interests must suffer. If each parish does not ask for what it requires, it need not expect that any one will come and offer it spontaneously, and so is it for every other division of the community. Are we going to beg the charity of a kind word in a press that but very reluctantly grants us a favor—and that would probably grant none at all had we not our weekly to stir them up? After detailing the diabolical work done by the A.P.A., the P.P.A., and kindred anti-Catholic societies, the reverend preacher went on to show how little we could do to save ourselves against these organizations and their underhand work if it were not for our Catholic paper. The merchant don't want it, he says; he can do without it; when his cash-box will become more empty on account of the increasing boldness of those enemies who find we have no power to resist them, he will begin to cry out for a paper. Let the Catholic policeman, or Catholic laborer, reflect upon the result.

These secret bodies gain a foothold; he is discharged on some pretext or another; an injustice has been done him; he has no redress, no means of making known to the public the outrage; because he has not even a weekly Catholic paper. And who is to blame? That man, himself; he allowed the only weapon he had to be broken, and as a consequence he now suffers. It is the same in the political, the municipal and in every other sphere. As long as we have a mouthpiece that men respect or fear, they will be just to us; but take away our arms and we will soon be crushed out of existence.

Evidently our Irish Catholic people are gradually being wiped out of Quebec; it will soon be so in Montreal, unless we be up and stirring. No matter what a man's occupation he needs support, and unless he can see the necessity of supporting in turn his only defender, he may be sure of ultimate failure. Nothing is more needed here to-day than a grand and complete High school for our children; but if we have no one to speak for us, if we shut off our only organ, if we silence the only voice that can plead our cause, we will be long without that or anything else of importance. Why is it that those "ex-nuns," "ex-priests," and other such characters who used to haunt our city and insult our creed, belie our Church and injure our feelings, keep clear of Montreal and ply their abominable business in another section of Canada? Simply because we have THE TRUE WITNESS, and that there is a pen ever ready here to turn their strongest weapons against themselves. Let THE TRUE WITNESS disappear and these people will soon reappear.

Suppose some great Irishman comes out here, and we have no paper of our own, no organ to record the event or to tell the views of our people; would it not be humiliating to have to depend upon the more or less exact reports of a stranger press! Royalty to-day is represented here by a Governor and his Lady, who are not ashamed or afraid to profess and practise a grand love for Ireland and her suffering people. Had we no weekly paper, how could we back up the grand work these noble people are doing? A St. Patrick's Day celebration takes place; we must depend upon half-hearted and often sarcastic reports of the day's events, that a more or less unsympathetic press might give; had we no TRUE WITNESS, what a humiliation the results of that day's proceedings would be? In a word, it is a duty to the Church, to the community, to our families and to ourselves, to give our paper all the support within our power. It is not as an act of charity; it is on business principle this is asked. Full value for the money will be given in a splendid paper, also in the protection it affords and later on—if properly encouraged—a dividend will come to each one who has invested in its stocks. The Rev. Father closed his lucid and splendid address, by a request to the parishioners to meet in the basement hall, and each one help in the good work, by subscribing for the paper or taking shares in its stock.

THE AFTER MEETING.

At the meeting after Mass, Dr. J. K. Foran, editor of the TRUE WITNESS, delivered short address which was most heartily appreciated. In addition to what Father Quinlivan had said he merely referred to the fact that as Catholic paper the TRUE WITNESS could recognize no political influence or party, and as an Irish Catholic organ it would oppose any movement or any body that might prove detrimental to the interests of the people, either individually or collectively; while their rights should be protected; their just claims and fair privileges should be asserted. For the present Dr. Foran said they only possessed the "blackthorn" of a weekly; but woe be to the head that would concoct anything injurious to either the Irish Catholics as a people, or to the Church whose truths the Catholic press should protect and propagate. Be that head upon the shoulders of one party or the other, it should learn how the famous Father O'Flynn, of the song,

"Lifted them all with a stick."

He closed by saying that as soon as the weekly would be on a firm basis a daily would at once be started, and that while retaining the "blackthorn" they would use the other as a regular "gatling-gun" to sweep the enemy at long ranges.

Some folks who claim to be above criticism are beneath contempt.