

RIGHT REV. JOHN O'BRIEN, D. D.

Rt. Rev. Bishop O'Brien, D. D., whose portrait we give on next page, was born in Loughboro' Township, twelve miles from his Episcopal city, Kingston, nearly fifty years ago. He took advantage of all that the schools of that day could bestow upon a young, ardent mind, ambitious to learn and desirous of overcoming every obstacle. His contemporaries of thirty-five years ago, speak to-day of his assiduity, his high moral qualities, and that intellectual force which put him in the first place in the village schools. When the young scholar had exhausted the modest curriculum of the country academy, his good parents—people of industry, irreproachable character and sterling worth—wisely determined to give him every opportunity for distinguishing himself in the career of learning for which he had already manifested so great a taste. Moreover, they had detected in their son's grave, amiable and religious character, certain marks which pointed toward the sanctuary. Hence, whatever sacrifice a higher course of education involved was cheerfully made by those good parents who hoped one day to see him offer the adorable sacrifice of the Mass for the living and dead.

We may imagine with what delight John O'Brien heard of his parents' decision in his regard. The desire of his heart was now to be fulfilled. The hitherto hidden beauty of classic lore—the splendid page of Grecian genius, the massive power of Roman intellect, the poets, orators, dramatists and historians of antiquity, were about to be unfolded before the eager youth, whose fresh, vigorous intellect revelled in the anticipated struggles and victories which awaited his nascent powers. And yet, we have no doubt, when the destined day of departure arrived, that his heart was heavy and full. The pleasant forest through which—a happy, careless child—he had roamed with companions guileless as himself—the lovely lake, with its wild, romantic scenery, whose waters had so often reflected the youngster's bright face—the secluded nooks where the choicest berries grew—the birds' nest perched on the very im-

minent edge of broken bones for the daring young climber—these, and many more delights must have overcast his soul with fond regrets, when the hour of departure arrived. For, it is just as hard for a child to break from life's associations in the tender bud, as it is for the bearded man to sever the connections of long years. It is youth makes us *laudatores temporis acti*, not mature age. Childhood's associations are always green and blooming in the soul.

Behold our young aspirant settled down to hard work which carried him back to the dim ages when the blind old ballad singer, Homer, wandered through Grecian towns—threatened, we doubt not, with inhospitable stocks, and pillory, and dogs, by village magnates and bucolic J. P.'s—when Sappho sang of love and Aristophanes was wandering amid the "clouds" or listening by swampy bogs to the "Frogs." Which introduced him to that finished *flaneur* and man of the world, Horace, or to the modest genius of Virgil, contented with his recovered farm, his shady beeches and his swarming hives. These and a thousand such attractions awaited the eager student, and that he pursued his task perseveringly, faithfully, is sufficiently manifest, for, on the Continent of America, there lives not to-day a more finished classical scholar than the venerable prelate of Kingston. Not a mere skim-milk translator of good Latin or Greek into bad English, like so many of our brilliant "Professors," "L. L. D.'s" "A. M.'s" and "A. S. S.'s," whose fame is in all the catalogues, but a thorough and deeply read scholar, profound in definitions, explications of customs, manners, literature and morals of antiquity, in short, a man, not content with the chips on the surface, but one who has dived below and collected pearls of great price. To a wonderful memory he joined a well-balanced judgment and an understanding broad and capacious. According to the German expression, he is a "many-sided" man. He is a highly distinguished mathematician, historian and philosopher, together with being well-read in general literature.

Bishop O'Brien made his theological course at the Grand Seminary of Quebec.