

The Catholic Register.

"Truth is Catholic; proclaim it ever, and God will effect the rest."—BALMEZ.

VOL. III.—No. 2.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 1895.

PRICE 5 CENTS.

REMINISCENCES.

Bishop Farrell of Hamilton.

In the short sketch submitted a few weeks ago on the life and successful administration of Bishop DeCharbonnel, one important event was not touched upon, viz: the partition of



THE LATE BISHOP FARRELL.

his diocese and the erection, due to him principally, of the two new dioceses of London and Hamilton. Bishop DeCharbonnel, who had a keen and observant eye to the future as to the present, saw that the population of Toronto city was increasing at a rapid rate.

Hamilton and London were also well started on the path of material progress, and seemed likely, in a few years, to count by additional thousands the number of their Catholic inhabitants. The primeval forests were rapidly disappearing, or being thinned out under the active and persevering industry of Upper Canada's hardy pioneers, the Scotch and Irish settlers, before whose brawn and sinew the mighty oak and beech and maple went down. North and west in all the country districts thriving villages and manufacturing towns were springing up and the dense woods that waved their nodding plumes all the way between Lakes Huron and Ontario, were fast making room for teeming fields and fruit-laden orchards. Bishop DeCharbonnel felt that no one prelate was equal to the task of supervising so extensive and populous a region, or of single-handed making the supply equal to the demand for new churches to worship in, and for priests to administer the sacraments and provide for the education of the rising generation. To Bishop DeCharbonnel's many pressing letters to the Holy See a reply came at last with a Brief authorizing the erection of two new dioceses and the consecration of two Bishops to take them in-charge. Monsignor Adolphe Pinsonneault, Secretary of Bishop Bourget of Montreal, was elected for London, and Very Rev. John Farrell, V.G., and parish priest

of Peterborough in Kingston Diocese was chosen for Hamilton.

In the early days a good deal of rivalry existed between Hamilton and Toronto. The former was called the "ambitious city" on account of her jealousy of Toronto's rapid growth and importance. She would willingly change names with her rival by the Don and be herself called the "Queen City." This spirit of emulation extended even to the churches. The Catholics of Hamilton were most anxious to have episcopal authority and prestige centred at home. When their wishes and aspirations were fully gratified, and when they saw in their new Bishop a man of elegant form and fine physique their joy was very great indeed. Bishop John Farrell added to the attractiveness of his noble form and open handsome countenance, the humility and simplicity of a child. In appearance he was most striking and once seen could never be forgotten. He stood six feet four inches in height and was beautifully proportioned, and graceful in all his movements. When clad in full pontificals with cope and crozier and lowering mitre, he looked the ideal Melchisedech or High Priest of God. He was the tallest and grandest looking personage of all the Bishops and Patriarchs assembled at the Vatican Council in Rome 1869.

With all this dignity of person and high Episcopal rank, there was none found among the Canadian Bishops so willing as he to humble himself to the ordinary toil of parochial work. When he took possession priests were indeed few in number in Hamilton Diocese. For several years he had for assistants in old St. Mary's Church, only the aged and venerable Vicar General Gordon and Rev. Father Carayon, who had been ordained by Bishop de Charbonnel, and who afterwards built the new church in Brantford. Bishop Farrell did the parochial work of two ordinary priests. He attended sick calls, visited the poor, heard confessions every week and every day when required. Very often he drove out fasting to Watford about ten miles distant, to celebrate Mass on Sunday morning after having officiated at an early mass in the city. He spent himself in laborious parochial work, while refusing himself the ordinary comforts of life in order to treasure up for the erection of a grand cathedral which he projected for the city of Hamilton.

Right Rev. John Farrell, D.D., was born in the city of Armagh, Ireland, on the 2nd June, 1820, where he resided with pious parents and family until the year of the cholera in 1832. In that year a general feeling of despondency was prevalent in Ireland on account of the infection of cholera that desolated many towns and villages, and also on account of the agitation and uprising against the enforcement of the tithes system.

Mr. John Farrell emigrated with his family to this country and settled in Kingston late in the fall of that eventful year.

Young Mr. Farrell, then twelve years of age, caught the attention of Bishop Angus McDonald, for whom he rec'd Mass every morning and for whom he taught a class of catechism every Sunday before Vespers in the afternoon. The penetrating eyes of Bishop McDonald saw a future priest probably a Bishop in the handsome young boy who was always ready to do noble service at school or at the altar. He sent the young man to St. Sulpice in Montreal, where he completed his classical course, and entered the Grand Seminaire at the age of 17 years where he remained until the completion of his theological course.

He was ordained priest by Bishop Gauhin at the College of L. Assumption in May 1840 and returned to Kingston, and although young and inexperienced was immediately appointed parish priest of L. Original. After two years hard work in this parish he was recalled to Kingston where he spent seven years, two of which were devoted to professional duties in Regopolis College. In this latter sphere, he had an opportunity which he did not lose of showing not only his scholarship, but also his administrative abilities which marked him out for early promotion to higher honours in the Church.

From Kingston his Bishop, as a further mark of appreciation, appointed him pastor over the most important parish in the Diocese, the city of Peterborough, where he remained discharging with zeal and untiring energy all the duties of his sacred calling, as the Catholics of Peterborough well remember to this day. They certainly gave touching evidence of their esteem and love for him when presenting him with a congratulatory address, on the occasion of his withdrawing from his pastoral charge in order to obey the Pope's mandate and accept the responsible duties of Bishop in the city of Hamilton.

Right Rev. John Farrell was consecrated bishop of Hamilton by Bishop Phelan in the Cathedral of Kingston on the 11th May, 1856, and took possession of his See on the 24th of the same month. He received a hearty and joyous welcome from the good people of Hamilton, who were all enthusiastic in their admiration of so grand and so noble a prelate. Father Gordon then pastor of Hamilton had known him when a boy in Kingston and had been his preceptor. He was more than delighted to see and welcome his former friend and pupil. The Bishop there and then appointed him Vicar General, which position the good old pioneer priest held till the day of his death.

Bishop Farrell had the intention of building a large and spacious cathedral on a lot on James street South, donated to him for that purpose by the late Vicar-General. Subscription lists were opened, not only in the city but throughout the diocese, and all his arrangements were completed to commence work in 1859, when by an accident one night old St. Mary's Church was burned to the ground. The immediate demand for church accommodation compelled him to abandon for the present his projected cathedral. He at once appropriated the funds collected and applied them

to the erection of St. Mary's Cathedral as it now stands on Park street.

In March, 1862, his first official visit was made to Rome. Again in April, 1866, he left for Rome to take part in the ceremonies of the eighteenth century of the martyrdom of Saints Peter and Paul. His last visit to the Eternal City was on the occasion of his visit to the Ecumenical Council, where the dogma of Papal Infallibility was proclaimed. On his return from Rome in August, 1870, he was met at the railway station by the whole Catholic population of the city and was presented with an eloquent address of welcome, accompanied with a magnificent carriage and spirited pair of horses. As the Lord-bishop was driven through the streets followed by a large procession many and loud were the expressions of welcome that greeted him from the citizens of all classes and denominations. This great and good priest took seriously ill in the early part of the summer of 1872, and in the first week of August his friends persuaded him to leave his post of duty and repair to the seaside for a few weeks relaxation. Acting on the advice of friends and physicians he started for Rockaway on Long Island. He had gone but a few days when, to the surprise of his household, he suddenly made his appearance on the night of August 12th apparently much worse than before his departure. He continued to sink rapidly for some days, when he rallied and became convalescent so as to be able to drive out. Suddenly he relapsed, however, and continued to grow worse until the 20th September when a calm and holy death put an end to his sufferings. One of the city papers, a Protestant journal, stated at the time that "His whole life was devoted to duty conscientiously performed as priest and Bishop, and indeed his devotion to the former in no inconsiderable degree shortened his days of usefulness and left a blank not easily filled."

Bishop Farrell's days were very much consoled and his labours lightened by the fidelity and devotion of Father M. Heenan, who became V.G. in succession to Vicar Gordon, and who shared in all Bishop Farrell's cares and anxieties. He is now Pastor of Dundas, Vicar General of the diocese and Prothonotary of the Apostolic See.

DIVYUS.

Archbishop McEvilly.

Archbishop McEvilly of the Irish See of Tuam, who has long ranked as one of the foremost scriptural scholars in the world, has in press a new work, entitled "Exposition of the Acts of the Apostles," which will be hailed with pleasure by those who have acquaintance with his exposition of the gospels and epistles. Dr. McEvilly has worn a mitre now nearly thirty-eight years, having been consecrated for Galway March 22, 1857. He succeeded Archbishop McHale in 1881, and he has the reputation of being one of the most scholarly of Irish ecclesiastics.

Peace propositions are pending between China and Japan.

The Sultan is furious on account of the speech recently delivered by Mr. Gladstone to the Anglo-Armenian deputation that waited upon him at Hewarden.