

Roscommon's New Church

A Ceremony and an Address that will Interest many Irish-Canadians

Roscommon, Ireland, June 20.—It is all the fulness of Catholic Ritual our new church was on Thursday dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Our Blessed Lord. The ceremony was performed by the Bishop of the diocese, Dr. Clancy. It was a day of joy to the parishioners, who in great numbers filled the spacious edifice in thanksgiving to God at the culmination of the labors of their worthy pastor, Monsignor McLaughlin, in rearing this magnificent temple to the glory of the Most High, and to the memory of their late Sacred Bishop, the Most Rev. Dr. Gillooly.

The avenue from Abbey street is over one hundred yards long, and is entered by a gateway of beautifully hammered ironwork by the firm of Messrs. McLaughlin, Dublin, hung on massive and highly chiseled cut limestone piers. The width of the entrance is 150 feet, and the rise from the street to the lower step is 14 feet. This displays the beauty of the facade, rich with stone and marble, mosaics and carving, seventy-five feet to the top of the cross.

Midway between entrance and church is a cored grotto in rustic work, arched and coved, containing a life-sized representation of the last dread scene on Calvary—the figures being in full relief, and the background painted.

The edifice on this commanding height is interiorly 160 feet long by ninety feet wide across the transepts, and sixty across nave and aisles. The height of the ridge of ceiling is nearly seventy feet.

A beautiful and highly interesting presentation to the church came under the public notice. This was the gift of a chalice, given by His Holiness the Pope, which was used for the first time at the High Mass.

The celebrant of the High Mass was the Most Rev. Dr. McCormack, Bishop of Galway, the Rev. Father Cummins, Adm. Loughglyn, was assistant priest, the Rev. Father Keane, C. C., Roscommon, deacon, the sub-deacon, the Rev. Father McManus, C. C., Ballygat.

After the High Mass had concluded, His Grace the Archbishop of Tuam, preaching from a text from Exodus: "They shall work in the sanctuary, and I shall dwell in the midst of them"—delivered an eloquent sermon, in the course of which he said: "This dedication of ours to-day may be described in one sentence as the solemn blessing and oblation of a beautiful temple for the public worship of God under the invocation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ, and in memory of the Most Rev. Dr. Gillooly, late Bishop of this diocese."

It may be said that Clonmacnoise, the greatest school of art in Ireland, got its inspiration from Roscommon, for Kiaran, son of the Wright, its founder, was a Roscommon man, or at least a Furry man. The maker of the great chalice that St. Patrick had, if not a native of the town of Roscommon, was a man of Elphin and its first Bishop. The beautiful processional Cross of Cong, or rather of Tuam, has some connection with Roscommon, and it is probable that MacEgan, who made it, was a Roscommon man. In my opinion, as a work of art, for the time, it is unapproached and unapproachable. There is no work in metal compares at all with the Cross of Cong in beauty of design and elegance of execution. And it may please you all to know that that beautiful cross has just been presented to this church by a most distinguished son of Roscommon, Dr. Michael Cox, of Merrion square, Dublin, to be kept here as a memorial of the past and of the present in the future, and, I may add, as a memorial in the future to the piety and zeal of the man who presented it to this church. His Grace continued to say that the church would appeal to the sympathies and charity of all who loved the Sacred Heart of Jesus, because it had the Sacred Heart as its titular, that was the Divine Being under whose name or title it had been founded, and after whom it was called the Church of the Sacred Heart. So he would appeal to them, for the love of the Sacred Heart, to open their hands that day and help their pastor and their Bishop to make the offering of this house to Him free of debt and incumbrance. His Grace continued: "This church is interesting from another point of view—namely, that it is a memorial church intended to commemorate the life and labors of the great prelate who ruled this diocese of Elphin. In making reference to his fruitful and laborious Episcopate, and connecting his memory with this beautiful building, it is not, of course, our intention to give any official or authoritative recognition to the sanctity of the deceased prelate. That is the exclusive prerogative of the supreme authority in the church. When we refer to his holy life and apostolic labors we speak with all due deference to the authority of the church and the supreme judgment of God. But with this reservation we can truly describe the late Bishop of Elphin as a prelate of great holiness of life, who rendered signal services to the Diocese of Elphin, and I might say the whole church of Ireland. I need not remind this illustrious assemblage of all that he did for his diocese in the

The French Congregations

Result on Europe of Combes' Persecution

Rome, June 17.—The French Republic has just lost a great moral and political battle in the face of the whole world. Two feelings dominate the general opinion regarding M. Combes' war upon the congregations: The joy at seeing France grow weak and lose consideration, and the praise for this internal dissension. Herr von Bismarck, in his best speech in 1888, proclaimed the importance of moral and "impponderable" forces in the delicate domain of general politics. The prestige, the good name, the influence and the respect for the republic have been lowered in all countries. What little sympathy there existed for the urbanity, the good grace and the humanism of France is dropping away like the leaves on a withering tree. For her rivals and those jealous of her, the feeling is joined to the keen desire that the war may continue and that France may shut herself out from the action of international Powers. The anti-clerical coalition had counted on the political results of Europe's favoring the religious persecution. The French Government thought that the excitement aroused by the Dreyfus affair and the spirit of imitation would prevent nations and States from giving the exiles a gracious hospitality. It seems indisputable that the hopes of the Paris coalition have been disappointed and that the Powers, instead of following the example of France, have received the expelled monks with eagerness. In Spain and in Portugal the imitation of the Parisian model has broken down in the face of the attitude of the people and the interests of the State. Some difficulties have arisen in Switzerland; at Athens the university professors have urged the Government to "save" Greek civilization; at Constantinople the orthodox and ecumenical Patriarch has devoted an encyclical to the "invasion" of the religious orders, whose schools disturb the Oriental indolence and inexperience. But, on the one hand, these persecutions have decided nothing, and, on the other hand, the persecuted have received elsewhere a generous, kindly and interested reception.

The French Republic with its civil war and its inextricable embarrassments is crucifying itself in a great solitude, like a funeral pyramid in the midst of a boundless desert. It alone has the privilege of taking pleasure in a suicidal policy. Even in Italy, to which the Quai d'Orsay offers favors, gold and concessions; in Italy, so hostile to the Pope; in Italy, where the whole external and internal policy is based on the fight against the Church—in Italy, the Government, in spite of the entreaties of the anti-clericals to resist the threatening deluge of the friars, has given a lesson of justice and of toleration to M. Combes and the majesty of the Palais Bourbon.

At London public opinion and the Government have showered attentions and flattering demonstrations on the monks. Among the Ritualists the proposal to join in the protests against M. Combes' regulations was discussed for a moment. Lutheran Prussia, I need not say, heaps up flattery and facilities. After the Kaiser's trip to Monte Cassino this fact stands out in peculiar relief; it is a conduct diametrically opposed to the hatred and violence of which the congregations are the victims at Paris. Doubtless these countries and states are willing to profit by the decapitation of the Republic. The monks bring to them capital and a moral body. What France loses the world gains. For two centuries, not without reason, the opponents of the monarchy have reproached Louis XIV. with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which impoverished France and enriched Europe. Granting the exaggerations which have been made for this view, we must accept the lessons which the exact parallel provides. We have the same procedure and the same violence, the same material, intellectual and moral losses.

Such are the profits and the advantages of M. Combes' policy. But such high views and such a serious weight of interests will not stop the arm nor the hatred of the cabal. M. Combes is obeying an order and a task; the persecution keeps on.

The Socialists' Triumph

Wilhelm II. Between Them and the Catholics

Rome, June 24.—The Vatican has received several reports on the character and the significance of the German elections. When a Cardinal was asked some time ago why Wilhelm II. was paying such assiduous court to the Pope and to the Catholics, and especially why the Kaiser paid so pompous a visit to the Vatican, against the wishes of the Quirinal, and finally, why he subordinates every policy of keeping good relations and close collaboration with the Church, he answered: "This ardor and this policy are attributed generally to the great idea of the re-establishment of the Empire of the West and to dreams of Pan-Germanism; that is true, but it is not the whole truth. In a few years the German Empire will enter into an organic crisis. Lutheranism is dying out; faith has become a rare jewel; from the ruins of Luther's Reformation the triumph of socialism will arise. Without the Catholics the Kaiser will be unable to rule. He will have to become wither Catholic or Socialist."

The German elections justify this prophetic view. Bismarck, with his wide-reaching and piercing glance, had seen the flood rising, and his patriotic spirit was alarmed by its creation. He proposed to Windhorst to abolish the May laws in exchange for the restriction of universal suffrage; he wished for a coup d'etat. The leader of the Center party refused; he declared that the Center, founded on the people, would never agree to a policy of political inequality and of hateful reaction. Bismarck did not dare to take action alone, but he said to Windhorst: "You are wrong; in 20 years the Socialists will have the majority in the Reichstag."

Twenty-three years have gone by. If the Socialists are not yet the ruling power in the Parliament, they form the majority in the Protestant provinces. Soon there will be only Socialists and Catholics in the Federal Parliament. From personal and trustworthy sources I learned last winter that Prussia, in consideration of the radical successes, was opening again the discussion of Bismarck's audacious plan and was considering the means of suppressing universal suffrage.

I believe that the plan exists. I doubt whether it will be carried into effect. Timid and vainglorious, the Kaiser lacks the coolness and the energy that are needed for a dramatic scene and coup d'etat. He is a representative man; he is neither an initiate nor one who can carry out a scheme. In the course of his boisterous and contradictory reign he has recoiled before every resistance. Eloquent tongues and vivid imagination are not arms of steel nor will, sure of themselves and implacable. As the Government has its majority with the help of the Center, it will keep on living from day to day. This temporary arrangement will last probably until the Socialists work their way into the Catholic districts. Will that ever come to pass? Will the Center be able to retain the loyalty of the people? That question will be answered by the Socialist party.

The New Vice-Chancellor of the Church

Sudden Death of Mgr. Volponi

Rome, July 9.—Monsignor Volponi, who was stricken with syncope yesterday, died early this morning shortly after the doctors in attendance had announced that all hope of saving his life had been abandoned. Although the condition of the Pope is still the center of interest, the case of Mgr. Volponi has attracted much attention, not only because of his office of secretary of the consistorial congregation, to which he had just been appointed by Pope Leo, but also on account of the manner in which he was seized by his fatal illness; and it is hardly possible to describe the sensation and emotion which prevailed at the Vatican when his death was announced.

From the moment he was stricken and fell to the floor, Monsignor Volponi lost entirely the power of speech, and the use of the right side of his body, and he was apparently unconscious when he died. It has been ascertained that the cause of death was cerebral congestion. It will be impossible to keep the news of the death of Monsignor Volponi from the Pope, as the office of secretary of the consistorial congregation, to which Pope Leo appointed the deceased prelate, July 5, the last appointment made by His Holiness, must be filled without delay in view of the possibility of a Papal interregnum, as it is known that at the moment a Pope dies the secretary of state ceases to exercise his functions, which pass to the hands of the secretary of the consistorial congregation, whose career is from that time assured, as, according to custom, he is first cardinal to be appointed by the new Pope.

The German Catholic Societies

The following resolutions among others were adopted at their tenth annual convention by the State League of German Catholic Societies of Pennsylvania. They show that the league is animated by the true Catholic spirit.

1. Our earnest endeavor shall be more and more to unite our Catholic men and young men around the glorious standard of the cross, against Free Masonry and the raging torrent of socialism and anarchism; to preserve them against all secret organizations under whatsoever title or cloak concealed; thus advancing our Catholic societies as far as in our power to greater growth and development; and especially protecting young men from their earliest years, against dangers of contagion of error.

The Catholic in Fiction

Recalls Quebec Victory

In the Reader for July, John J. A'Becket has an article in which he belittles the attitude of the Catholic in reality toward the Catholic in fiction. He mentions several writers of novels who sin notoriously in presenting distorted pictures of Catholics and of the Catholic Church, and says: "The Catholic approves or condemns portrayal of the Church and its members in literature, whether fictional or historical, simply as it accords with the truth; namely, whether the teaching of the Church and the modus agendi of those who profess its faith and live up to it are correctly presented."

"It is where the dogmas of the Church are misrepresented or scoffed at; where the spirit of the Church is belied, and her practices and ceremonies are derided or false presented; where the character of her ministers are assailed, that the Catholic feels most resentment; and it is in these respects that he feels calumniated where the Christian believer who is not a Catholic may not."

"No Catholic is offended at a sincere, conscientious dissection toward the Church, or open antagonism to it, so long as the opponent is honest and fights fair. Every enlightened, well-grounded Catholic has a vital conviction that he possesses truth in the supreme question of religious belief, and that there can be no argument brought against Catholic verity which is not susceptible of refutation."

"When the Hail Caines and the Marie Correllis indulge in dalliance with things Catholic, no Catholic will lose his sleep or' nights on their account. Writers of this kind who bear down upon the Church are like tiny insects that impinge upon the globe of a dazzling electric light. They may slightly obscure its rays, but are apt to perish themselves. Such writers only brush like wanton children against the fringes of Catholic verity, noting little and heeding less its deeper inner spiritual significance."

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