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# The Catholic Register.

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## Down the St. Lawrence

### Within Cloister Walls

(Special for The Register.)

While it might be interesting were I to continue last week's contribution by giving a sketch of each of the important institutions in the old city of Three Rivers, still I find that no weekly paper could afford the space necessary to do justice to each and all of them. Consequently I will occupy what light I may have in your columns this week with a brief account of the oldest, most unique and most special of these institutions. I refer to the Ursuline Monastery. Not only is it the most important, but it is the most exceptional as far as concerns the writer and the great public in general.

Some years ago a lady writer—I since learned it was a lady—over the nom de plume of "Fidella" contributed a series of very highly colored sketches of the Province of Quebec to the columns of The Mail and Empire. As far as regards the Catholic institutions, religious, educational or charitable of the Province that writer was anything but exact, in fact, "Fidella" was a misnomer. I would not say that she intentionally misrepresented these establishments; but she wrote about that which she had not seen, or studied, or understood. When such a writer errs in attempting to describe the life within cloister walls the sin is rather that of drawing upon the imagination. In the first place this lady, a Protestant, of course, hazarded to depict that which no ordinary Catholic writer, lay or clerical, would attempt, for the very good reason that the Catholic—male or female, lay or cleric—who is permitted to visit the interior of a monastery is such a rare exception that but few can speak or write about such an institution with the positive assurance of the one who has seen. Much less must it be so in the case of a non-Catholic newspaper correspondent, who may have never set foot even within the public reception room of a cloister, most decidedly who saw one inch inside the cloistered precincts.

For reasons that it is not necessary for me to mention, I had received the very exceptional privilege of spending almost a whole day within the forbidden limits of the Ursuline Monastery. The barrier that separates the religious from the world and that keeps out the world from that sacred enclosure, may be of stone, or of wood, but it is in reality an episcopal wall that the Church raises and that episcopal hands alone can break. That necessary episcopal permit was accorded

me, and in the company of the Vicar-General I was introduced within the monastic limits, and there spent a little over five hours.

It must not be imagined that inside of a monastery all is gloom and sadness; far from it. Rarely have I ever met with happier faces and more joyous dispositions than amongst the Sisters of St. Ursula. In fact, once the apparently grim barrier was passed I felt myself in a newer and fresher atmosphere, one that might properly be characterized as happy and peaceful. It was vacation time; the large wing—a vast institution in itself—that is used as the boarding-school was practically closed; the novices were in the gardens and extensive grounds within the monastic enclosure; the Superior and Sister Secretary, who showed me through and described every detail of daily life, were free from the additional labors that belong to the scholastic term; and within the whole cloister at will I will begin with the top of the house, as it is easier to come down than go up, and as I must follow, in this brief sketch, some course more systematic than the erratic proceedings of complete liberty exercised in the actual visit.

Beginning, then, with the upper stories, that consist of the quarters allotted to the novices, and the cells of the regular members of the community, I was struck by the fact that, while the inmates are excluded from all communication with the active world outside, they are far from being excluded from the enjoyment of magnificent scenery. The busy life of the streets may not be seen in detail, but from these upper windows one looks out upon the whole city, the surrounding country, the broad St. Lawrence, and its wealth of steamers and vessels surging in and out with the products of the Old World and of the New. And I could not help instituting a comparison in my mind: Here are those cloistered nuns gazing out upon all that nature can present of grand and attractive, unseemly by the human tide below they see all that is inspiring and worthy, from the pure sky above to the blue hills beyond, and the intervening scenery so variegated and so wonderful. So in their lives did I find that while they are removed from the din and glitter, the clash and glare of the world, they are conversant with every detail of public life, of administrative affairs, of governments and of legislators, of journalism and of literateurs, of all that we ignore, while we are in the very midst of the struggle.

In passing from the large community room, along the corridors lined with the simple cells of the Sisters, we came upon one small room, with a more comfortable bed than could be found elsewhere in the establishment. As I looked in, and was about to express my surprise at the comparative luxury (?) of that one room, the good Mother, divining my thought said: "We, each in turn, and all of us, come here to die." She added: "On that bed each member of the community, for long years back, has died, and some day I too, shall come here to give up my soul to God." I asked then to see the Mother Superior's own cell. Imagine my surprise to find it exactly the same as each of the others. And of what consists the furniture of a monastic cell? Needless to say that the floor is perfectly devoid of any carpet or matting. There is a bed, very narrow and very hard, the framework is of rough wood, the mattress of straw, the covering one blanket. There is one common wicker chair, a small prie dieu and on the wall a large crucifix. There is absolutely nothing else in the room—which is, a little larger than a small stateroom on a St. Lawrence steamer. Any one glancing at the interior of such a sleeping apartment might readily recall the graphic descriptions in Gerald Griffin's "Sister of Charity," and find that there was as much truth as poetry in that splendid poem.

It would be a very long story to tell of the library, of the archives,

and historical documents in the Secretary's office; nor would my space permit of such details at present. I remarked that if the members of the community are subjected to monastic rules and restrictions, they certainly are not deprived of fresh air and exercise. A more delightful and more instructive spot I have rarely visited than the beautiful—might use the word perfect—garden of the cloister. The profusion of roses, not to speak of the countless other flowers, would defy description. At the extreme end of the garden is a miniature chapel, with canons, kneeling desks and perfect gear of an altar. The walls are adorned with tiny Stations of the Cross—each picture a masterpiece. Here the Sisters come, during recreation, or during outdoor working hours, to pray, to meditate and to rest. At the other end of the garden is the cemetery. All the graves are alike, each has its rude wooden cross with the name and age of the deceased written upon it. And the last grave is still covered with flowers; and it will so remain, until another Sister dies and goes down into the vacant grave that awaits her. Then the flowers are placed upon that last one and another grave is dug. This garden seemed to me to be the image of the life of a religious. At vespers she made the great sacrifice of her earthly existence, as she entered the cloister; from that hour forward, amidst the perfumes and beauties of virtues such as the world cannot fathom, she walked slowly towards the grave that must close the silent pilgrimage, there to repose with her sisters gone before her, in communion with them and with those left behind, through the Communion of Saints. For the present I will refrain from any cold facts of history, and merely leave the reader to imagine what must be a life within the cloister precincts of St. Ursula.

The latest development of the literary cult, of which St. Francis of Assisi is the subject, is the foundation at Assisi of an International Society of Franciscan studies, under the patronage of the Queen Mother, the widow of the late King Humbert of Italy. The honorary president is Professor Paul Sabatier, the author of one of the most recent of the numerous Lives of St. Francis, who has treated the subject with much sympathy, insight, and critical acumen, although his conclusions on some points have been disputed and withdrawn or modified. He has also edited the Latin text of the "Speculum Perfectionis," a short life of the saint by his disciple, the well-known Brother Leo, whom the saint loved to call "pecorello di hon Dio." The acting president is Count Antonio Fiumi Roncalli, the vice-president Professor Leto Alessandri; and the secretaries Professors Regolo Casali, Mariano Falcei, and Francesco Pennacchi. Among those who form the Council of the Society are the Very Rev. Francesco Dall'Olivo, guardian of the famous sacro Convent at Assisi, built by the erratic Brother Elias, and which contains the tomb of St. Francis, discovered in 1818; Very Rev. Gregoria Frangipani, O. S. B., cure of St. Peter's, and the Very Rev. Canon Luciano Zempa, Professor of Theology.

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## UNITED IRISH LEAGUE

Ottawa Branch Sends Out an Appeal for Aid to the Parliamentary Party.

Ottawa, Aug. 5.—At a special general meeting of the Ottawa branch of the United Irish League, held at St. Patrick's Hall, an appeal was unanimously adopted to "follow-countrymen and friends." After reciting the history of Parliamentary government in Ireland, with particular reference to Grattan's Parliament, the appeal concludes: "Fellow-countrymen, the Irish contingent in the British Parliament need pecuniary aid to carry on the fight, and we now appeal to you to respond to the call. Collectors, duly authorized, will wait upon you without delay, and we hesitate not to predict that the call will not be made in vain. The following have full authority to solicit subscriptions: Hon. John Costigan, M. P., Dr. A. Freeland, F. B. Hayes, J. B. Sullivan, P. Mungovan, J. O'Meara, Jas. Bennett, Ed. Reardon, William Dunnehan and P. Blake.

"Signed on behalf of the branch, A. Freeland, President; J. B. Bergin, Secretary."

## DEATH CLAIMS NOTED CONVERT.

C. Kegan Paul, whose death was reported from London last week, was one of the better-known converts whom the Church in England owes to Newman's subtle and abiding influence. He was a scholar as well as a dealer in books, and he took the greatest pride in turning out work that was as nearly perfect typographically as it was fine in intellectual qualities.

Mr. Paul was born at White Lakington, near Ilminster, Somersetshire, in 1828, and was educated at Eton and Exeter College, Oxford. After taking orders in the English Church he was a curate at Great Tew and Bloxham, and after he left Eton he was for twelve years vicar of Sturminster. In 1874 he entered the publishing business, retiring in 1899.

A large number of the books published by Mr. Paul's firm have been sought after by collectors, and they also include many which have proved extremely valuable to scholars. Mr. Paul was himself an author of considerable note. He wrote a translation of "Faust" and a life of Goethe, edited the letters of Mary Woolstonecraft and produced a number of other literary works, including the remarkable essay entitled "Faith and Unfaith," a translation of Pascal's "Thoughts," a version of Huxham's "Ex Route," an edition of the "Imitation" and a simple and manly account of the intellectual process that led to his conviction that the church to which Newman had submitted was the one haven of salvation for a heart that wished to be perfectly sincere. Mr. Paul could be seen almost daily towards the close of his life kneeling for an hour in the afternoon in a quiet corner of the Servites' church at Kilmam.

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## Notes Along The Highway

Recently I started out from Ottawa in pursuit of game, and as I commissioned myself to enjoy a "holiday" in its full text, and not being overburdened with predilections or prejudices, I didn't care a thrance what the quantity or the quality of the game would be. Coming down to the Central Station at Ottawa then, and investing a portion of my hoarded wealth in pastebars, and as the stenorian lungs of a gentleman decked out in the dazzling panoply of brass buttons, lustily shouts "All Aboard," I enter one of the palatial cars of the Canada Atlantic Railway Co., and am soon steaming along in a southeasterly direction, side by side with the bright and sparkling waters of the Rideau Canal. Passing Eastman's Springs along the way, I was surprised at the number of Ottawa people who are obliged to leave their offices, their counting rooms and their stores, and come out here to slake their thirst at the healthy waters of its copious fountains. A mental investigation induces the saddening reflection that only wealthy people alone are they who used it, and the poor who cannot afford indulgence in spiritualized waters at home, are deprived of the pleasures of a trip to Eastman's Springs, Caledonia Springs, Banff Springs, Hot Springs or springs of any sort whatever. Leaving Eastman Springs with its sulphurous odor behind, and passing on the way Casselman, Indian River, etc., I reach, after little more than an hour's travel, the flourishing village of Alexandria.

Alexandria, so called in honor of the first Bishop of Kingston, Right Rev. Alexander Macdonald, is situated in the heart of a fine agricultural country. It is a Bishop's See, presided over by a grand man; grand in his zeal, grand in his piety, and grand in his learning and fine qualities of citizenship—a full namesake of the dignity alluded to already; it has churches and schools of vastly greater importance than those found in places of greater pretensions; it has a variety of manufacturing industries, and with a population of about 2,000 one is astonished that it still remains classed as a village. Alexandria, being the chief central point in the County of Olenagarry, and always the home of clever men, has been the rallying point of many a hard fought political contest. Olenagarry had able men to represent it in Parliament in the persons of the McDonalds, the McMahons, the McLeans, etc. In the Parliament of Upper and Lower Canada, prior to Confederation, it was represented by a Postmaster-General of that period, Donald A. McDonald, brother of the first Premier of Ontario; in subsequent years Donald McMaster now a leading lawyer of the Dominion, was bringing it increased honor on the floor of Parliament, until, unfortunately, that clever man fell before a shower of silver bullets and bank note wadding, which went out from the well stored magazine of his rival, and R. R. McLeannan also contributed enormous weight to the deliberations of Parliament, and doubtless would have continued doing so had

he not been thrashed out and completely shelled by the gentleman who at present ably and efficiently carries the banner of Olenagarry County.

During the good old days when Canadian Tories were enjoying the harvest of plenty, it was felt that Canada besides possessing political criminals who were alarmingly on the increase had also a growing crop of another brand, and that it was of paramount importance to the well-being and permanent stability of society that an institution should at once be erected wherein those poor unfortunate fellows should enjoy plenty of healthy exercise, so that in a brief time they would undergo a complete reformation. Many an Ontario hamlet sought the blessings of a Reformatory Prison and many a self-sacrificing Tory held pieces of land upon which such a much-needed institution should be built, but Alexandria won the prize through the thundering eloquence, majestic presence and vigorous vote of "Big" Rory McLeannan.

But a day came when it was considered fitting that that this should be changed. A battle of the ballots is held which drives out the Tory almoners with a swarm of their scullions from the kitchen and scullions of the Government, and Alexandria, patronage, the vessel containing it as it is about to slip the nectar of falls to the ground and is shattered to pieces. Mr. Tarte, one of the gentlemen who materially contributed towards driving Tories out of business, and who knows much of the crookedness of their methods, declines to insult the innocent Alexandrians by presenting them with a Reformatory Prison. He must know them to be a people who keep a fair number of commandments, who keep from bad whiskey, who neither personate voters, nor tamper with ballot-boxes, and it would be positively dangerous for their morals and their future happiness to have in their midst a horde of criminals gathered up in all parts of the Province. Better things are, however, in store for Alexandria, and if they are not forthcoming at once she has in her own hands the means of forcing the Government to shell out.

The commercial and social life of Alexandria is almost exclusively made up of the descendants of Scottish Highlanders. I have often explored its avenues and its thoroughfares in search of a few Irishmen, but could not find many, and my surprise was great when not finding a greater number of importations from the Emerald Isle in so favored a region and amongst a people possessing such ennobling qualities. To an Irishman like myself the tallman cry "Clann nan Gael a Ghobule le Ceile" must always have a charm. Mr. John Boyle, who, I am happy to say, is flourishing like a green bay tree, must be a lucky sort of an Irishman when he conceived the idea of throwing out his shingle in such a neighborhood.

My description of Alexandria, imperfect as it is, would be infinitely more so did I not make reference to a well-known and respected resident thereof who, through his genial nature and his large fund of humorous anecdote, has made each recurring visit a pleasure. I allude to Mr. D. A. McArthur, a man of fine abilities, whose voice has been often and effectively heard from many a platform not alone of Olenagarry, but of counties far beyond it. Mr. McArthur is a man widely known. Why so elevated a man has not at some time represented his native county in either the Federal or Provincial Legislatures is a question often put to me. That he could do so had he sought it, I feel perfectly certain. Mr. McArthur has been many years in commercial business, but although he would be able to pass for a young man still, more especially in a strange place, he recently holed down his flag.

Leaving Alexandria, I set out for Green Valley, where I take train for the Connaught Settlement. In my next, I will attend to the Connaught Settlement. "HAMBLER."

## CARDINAL GOTTI

Appointed Prefect of Propaganda to Succeed the Late Cardinal Ledochowski.  
Rome, July 30.—Cardinal Gotti, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars and of Regular Discipline, was yesterday appointed Prefect of the Propaganda, to succeed the late Cardinal Ledochowski. The Pontiff's choice has produced a favorable impression.

"I neither expected nor wished my appointment," the new Prefect is quoted as saying, "but, like a soldier, when my chief commands, I obey."

Cardinal Gotti was a monk of the barefooted Carmelite order, and still to this day, in spite of his elevation to the rank of a prince of the Church continues to live the life of a monk, sleeping in a cell on a hard mattress. He was up to the moment of his receiving the sacred hat the general of the Carmelites, and although of the most humble birth, being the son of a dock laborer at Genoa, has, it is said, been repeatedly designated by Leo XIII. as the prelate whom he would wish to see elected as his successor.

Cardinal Vannutelli will replace Cardinal Gotti as Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars and of Regular Discipline. Cardinal Agliardi was appointed Prefect of the Economy of the Congregation of the Propaganda, in place of Cardinal Vannutelli.

## COMMERCIAL EDUCATION.

The new catalogue of the Central Business College, Toronto, which has just been issued, reflects to some extent the popularity of business education, as it shows that 783 pupils registered in that College during the 11 months ending July 31st. This very liberal patronage bestowed upon the school in question must also be taken as an indication of the excellent reputation this College has won for its thorough work and for the success of its students and graduates. You should not fail to read the announcement of this reliable school in our advertising columns from time to time.

## ST FRANCIS CHURCH CORNERSTONE LAYING.

The ceremony of laying the cornerstone of St. Francis Church, corner Grace and Arthur streets, will take place on Sunday, Aug. 10, at 3 p.m. His Grace the Archbishop will officiate. The street cars run along Arthur street to the site of the new church and visitors from other parishes should take transfers.

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