

# The Catholic Register.

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

VOL. III.—No. 22.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, MAY 30, 1895.

PRICE 5 CENTS.



## NIAGARA PENINSULA.

History of the Catholic Church Along the Frontier River.

DEAN HARRIS' LATEST WORK.

In this relation the order of time is not the order of importance. The point of time about which the history of the Church in the Niagara district extends is that which witnessed the influx of the Irish immigrants, the period between 1840 and 1850. From then onward the place has had a Catholic existence. Were it not for that vast migration the records of the French missionaries would have had but little of living interest. We would have known that in 1626 de la Roche Dailion was in the vicinity, in 1640 Brebeuf and Chaumonot, in 1660 Galmeo and Dollier de Casson, in 1676 Hennepin and La Salle, but for a century and a half thereafter "the rest is silence," and only the new life of the Church in the towns and villages gives to the doings of the missionaries a personal interest.

We expected a good book from Father Harris and we have not been disappointed. Better than the immediate interest of the work itself will be the interest it will arouse in others advantageously situated for similar tasks. This Province is one vast field of historical research which may be subdivided into innumerable plots each of which will well repay skilful cultivation. Happily the Dean has chosen a convenient starting place. Geographically the peninsula is the right size for a local history. In the national story its part has been an honorable one. Reading this narrative is like taking the first bite at the small end of a pear. One gets the full and exact flavor immediately. What is here described of St. Catharines and the neighboring towns is to be matched in every parish in Ontario.

Almost anyone who has lived in a Catholic settlement can recall tales of human interest centering about the parish church. Everyone knows of the heroic lives of priests, of the trials of early settlers, of the days when to wear Mass it was necessary to walk many miles over bad roads, when the suit of a priest was a half yearly or quarterly occurrence; when men of learning, of business ability, of powerful minds passed their lives in the obscure way of the priest.

when these same men, whose abilities would have elsewhere procured them lives of comparative ease, set aside comfort, rest, even life itself in ministering to the distant sick in terrible weather. These stories are worth writing. The tale the settlers alone can tell should be collected and inscribed before these settlers have all passed away.

Our valued correspondent, Delymus, has of recent months done much in this direction. He has told the story of several great priests. He has told the story of the French settlement in Essex. We hope soon to present the story of the German settlement from an equally able authority. Besides these there are the Glengarry settlement, of which much has been written from the secular view, but little that is essentially Catholic, the Irish settlements along the Ottawa, and the mixed parishes in all parts of the Province.

Father Harris' engaging narrative style suffices to control the impatience of the reader while he maintains the chronological order, which is not as has been said, in this case the order of interest or importance. The real history begins with the work of Dean Grattan and Father Conway. Father Harris begins with the life of the Neutral nation and the visits of the missionaries. One of these missionaries planted a cross near what is now Fort Erie. Mass was said in the vicinity three and a half centuries ago. Missionary heroism has indeed left its impress there.

Niagara next became important to the Catholic historian when the seat of Government for Upper Canada was located at Newark. Irish Catholic soldiers became part of the garrison and Father Burke went as often as possible to attend to their spiritual wants. Even after the governor had removed to Toronto, soldiers were long stationed at this point, and the successive priests had more than one struggle against official bigotry. Father Gordon insisted upon the soldiers attending Mass on Sunday, and was able to secure that advantage for them over the head of their immediate superior.

The chapters which deal with the migration of the Irish people, the distress in the early days of the canal and the generous efforts made by Mr. W. H. Merritt for the relief of the sufferers are all of the greatest interest and importance. We cannot here attempt any summary of the labors of Dean Grattan, Father Conway, Dean Mulligan and the many assistants, some of whom have died but of whom some are still living and widely known. The tributes, general and individual, to the worth of early settlers must be read in the book itself, which is published by William Briggs and is a handsome sample of the bookman's art, selling for two dollars.

Instances of the author's generous tact are not few. The work is dedicated to Father Sullivan of Thorold, a co-laborer for many years and the very type of priest in whose praise the book is written, the last lines of the last chapter are a feeling tribute to Dean Mulligan, to whom the present Dean succeeded in 1884, and the last of the appendices is devoted to the parish of St. Mary's on the Western Hill and in particular to the work of the present able pastor, Father Allaine.

## MONSIGNOR NUGENT.

The Difficulties in the Way of Making a Great Catholic Paper.

AN INTERVIEW IN ROME.

In Rome recently, the Venerable Monsignor James Nugent, of Liverpool, England, was waited upon by a correspondent of the Philadelphia Catholic Times.

"My health," he said, "has been perfectly restored to me, and I cannot help feeling that Rome has done more for me than any other place. Last August Cardinal Vaughan, going away after visiting me, said to a friend 'I am afraid we have seen the last of poor Nugent.' I have suffered much since then, including a painful operation. At the Canary Isles I had fine weather, except during the month of March, which was altogether rainy. It was there that I began to recruit, and Rome has completed my recovery." Mgr. Nugent's appearance and activity while in the Eternal City, more particularly towards the close of his stay, attest his complete recovery. All Catholics will rejoice that the doer of such great things is quite himself again. Mgr. Nugent continued: "My responsibilities are great, as you may know, and they have not been altogether taken off my shoulders during this illness. I have efficient substitutes at home, but with one's purse in the hands of others, one feels in a hurry to be at home again. I shall be sorry to miss the coming festivities in honor of St. Philip's centenary, but I must to work again."

"Have you seen the Holy Father?" I asked.

"Well, no," he answered. "I did not apply for an audience, knowing his occupations, and not conscientiously feeling that I had any sufficiently urgent reason to justify my asking. The Holy Father knows I am here and ready at his call, could I be of service. Should I approach him, however, I could speak of the development of Catholic journalism."

Mgr. Nugent then related the uphill work of founding the Catholic Times.

"You are right," he said, "in calling it an *œuvre* rather than a speculation. It was no gain to me for a very long spell of years, though we now boast a circulation of fifty thousand, and we do not deal in exaggerations. That is the largest circulation of any Catholic paper, but it has been attained, thanks to long years which were not less profitless in regard to money than toil-some in regard to endeavor. Even in those dark days of financial unsuccess the best writers were employed on the Catholic Times, eminent members of Parliament not being unwilling to receive our slight but duly paid remuneration."

"In America," said Mgr. Nugent, "I am widely known, and that is better still, I am remembered by countless friends. I believe I have as many friends there as in Europe, and as my sympathies with everything American are so very strong, I naturally go to the American College when I am in Rome. Last Friday I delivered a lecture to the students,

taking for my subject the right rules of reading and speaking. I count this subject as among the most important for priests, much as it is neglected in our seminaries. I hope to speak repeatedly on the subject and then to publish the lectures. My lecture on Friday night was a pleasure to me because my attentive listeners were the brilliant representatives of America in Rome."

His Grace at Atlantic City.

Father Fedigan had as his guest on Sunday, the 12th inst., the Most Rev. John Walsh, Archbishop of Toronto, Canada. His Grace is blessed with a fine physical presence and his age gives him that venerable appearance that attracts the respect and admiration of all who have the pleasure of meeting him. He preached an eloquent and forcible sermon on the Gospel of the day. Speaking of God as the Creator, Redeemer and sanctifier of the human race, his eloquent remarks, relating to the Holy Ghost being always present with the Church, and his reference to the silly efforts of societies to attack and root up the faith, produced a good impression on those present. It is seldom that visitors and residents are permitted to enjoy such an intellectual treat.—Catholic Standard.

Carleton's Family.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor, in his paper The Weekly Sun has made an appeal on behalf of the daughters of William Carleton, the well known Irish novelist, who have been living in a state of great destitution. They are old and feeble, and were so very poor that even during the severe weather last winter they were actually without either food or fire. This appeal has been generously responded to, and amongst the first to subscribe was Sir George Trevelyan, who was for some time Chief Secretary for Ireland, and at present a Cabinet Minister, who forwarded a most kindly letter and a subscription of £10. Mr. O'Connor hopes to purchase an annuity for those poor ladies should sufficient money be subscribed for the purpose. It is a sad reflection that the daughters of one who was certainly one of Ireland's best known writers should, in their old age, have to suffer such privations.

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