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London, Saturday, March 17, 1900.

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION.

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA,

Ottawa, Canada, March 7th, 1900.

The Editor of THE CATHOLIC RECORD,

London, Ont.

Dear Sir: For some time past I have read

your estimable paper, THE CATHOLIC RE-

CORD, and congratulate you upon the man-

ner in which it is published.

Its matter and form are both good; and a

truly Catholic spirit pervades the whole.

Therefore, with pleasure, I can recommend

it to the faithful.

Believe me, to remain,

Yours faithfully in Jesus Christ,

D. FALCONIO, Arch. of Ottawa.

DECLINED TO PRESIDE.

Miss Annie Bassant, who is regarded

as the high priestess of one of the sects

into which Theosophy is divided, is

now in India, and in order to obtain a

certain status in the country she en-

deavored recently to get Lord Curzon,

the British Viceroy, to preside at one of

her meetings, but he declined in cour-

teous terms. A paper of India, men-

tioning the fact, says that:

"His Lordship is probably of the

opinion, and rightly so, that the spiri-

tual aspirations and the physical needs

of India require something more sub-

stantial than the fanciful theories of

Theosophy to satisfy her needy mil-

lions in their hunger for truth."

There is surely no theory of either

ancient or modern philosophers, so-

called, which has a more unsubstantial

basis than this same Theosophy, which

is a mere revival of old and exploded

errors of belief, such as the Metempsy-

chosis of the Pythagoreans, and the

religious vagaries of Pagan Egypt.

Lord Curzon did wisely in declining

to give Miss Bassant the public encour-

agement she desired.

PROFESSOR MIVART.

The London Times publishes at

length the correspondence which

took place between Cardinal Vaugh-

an and Professor St. George

Mivart in reference to the erroneous

teachings of the Professor, from which

it is certain that his Eminence the Car-

dinal exhausted all the means which

kindness would suggest to induce the

distinguished Professor not to abandon

his faith, to which he was converted in

1844. The Professor, in his letters in

reply to the Cardinal, maintains his

right to adhere to all, or at least nearly

all, the errors of Rationalistic treat-

ment of the Bible. This, of course, could

not be tolerated in the Catholic Church,

and the Cardinal could not do anything

else than forbid him to partake of the

sacraments, in which, it is evident, he

has no sincere belief. Nevertheless,

with curious pertinacity the Professor

declares his great attachment to Cath-

olicism, "as he understands it," and

that he loves its rites, and will not

cease to assist at them, for he believes

that "divine worship is the highest

privilege of a rational nature." He

declares, in effect, that he will not at-

tach himself to any other form of Chris-

tianity, as the sects do not reach his

ideal of the proper worship of God.

A GOOD MOVEMENT.

It is stated that an effort is being

made in New York city to improve the

school system to the extent that the

Catholics may be relieved of the great

burden of supporting parochial and

public schools at the same time. The

plan proposed is that Christians of all

denominations, and Hebrews as well,

who believe that children should re-

ceive religious instruction, may be

able to use the Public schools, and still

have an opportunity to be taught their

religion in the schools, so that they

may not grow up to be merely clever

unbelievers. The object is not to have

help from the State or the Municipal

government to teach religion, but that

religion may not be ignored, as the

case is at present in all the Public

schools. This end will be attained by

having the State pay for the secular

teaching and either leaving the Church

to supply the religious teaching or by

the State furnishing teachers who will

be capable of giving suitable religious

teaching. It should not be difficult for an arrangement to be made whereby all this may be brought about to the public satisfaction, if good will be brought to bear on the matter.

Rev. Father P. F. McSweeney, rector of St. Bridget's Church, is the chief promoter of the movement. Catholics everywhere must always bear in mind that religion should be taught along with secular instruction.

THE QUEEN TO VISIT IRELAND.

It has been announced that the Queen will visit Ireland early next month. Her Majesty has visited Ireland only three times during her sixty three years' reign, namely, in 1849, 1853 and 1861. The proposed visit is understood to be a recognition of the magnificent bravery exhibited by the Irish regiments in the South African war. Simultaneously with this announcement Her Majesty has ordered that Irish soldiers shall wear the shamrock on St. Patrick's Day, also in recognition of Irish bravery.

We are pleased to notice in connection with this that Mr. John Redmond, leader of the Irish Nationalist party, said in the House of Commons on Friday that:

"The Irish people receive with gratification the announcement that her Majesty had directed that the shamrock be worn by the Irish regiments on St. Patrick's Day, adding that the Irish people would welcome this graceful recognition of the valor of the Irish race wherever exhibited, and would treat with respect the venerable Sovereign about to visit the Irish shore, well knowing that on that occasion no attempt would be made to give the visit any party significance, and that their chivalrous hospitality would not be taken to mean any abatement of their demands for national rights, which they would continue to press until conceded. Mr. Redmond was loudly cheered."

We read these words with pleasure, because we believe that it is not wise to preserve continuously an irreconcilable attitude towards the Queen and the people of England, in face of the fact that the legislation of the last few years has greatly improved the condition of the Irish people. At the same time the ultimate attainment of Home Rule ought not to be lost sight of, as Mr. Redmond also said.

The changed conditions should make a corresponding change in the attitude of the people of Ireland, and we notice with equal pleasure that the Irish press endorse Mr. Redmond's position.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY.

We celebrate on Saturday, the 17th inst., the feast of St. Patrick, the patronal Saint of Ireland, a day on which Irishmen in every land turn their thoughts toward their native land, and the descendants of Irishmen for generations also cherish a grateful remembrance of the land of their ancestors.

The history of the life and labors of the great saint have been frequently spoken of in our columns, and are always treated of at greater or less length, and usually with considerable fullness, in the pulpits of our Catholic churches everywhere. We will, therefore, be brief on this point.

St. Patrick was born toward the close of the fourth century, probably A. D. 372, of a patrician family, his father being Calpornius and his mother Concessa, niece to St. Martin, Bishop of Tours. His birthplace is disputed, but the best authenticated opinion is that Bonaven Taberniae, which in his Confessionals stated to be the locality of his birth, was a Roman station near Boulogne in France.

He received his mission to preach the Gospel in Ireland from Pope Celestine, who died in 432. Within a very short time he succeeded in converting the whole Irish people to the faith of Christ, and lived long enough to establish the faith firmly, with a permanent hierarchy, and he held many councils to settle the discipline of the Church. The year 464 is generally believed to have been that of his death. St. Patrick's wonderful work must ever endure his memory to the people of Ireland and their descendants.

With the greatest constancy have the Irish people adhered to the faith of St. Patrick for nearly fifteen centuries, and it is to this constancy that most of Ireland's sufferings must be attributed, because her people accepted the thorny yet glorious martyr's crown, especially during the past three hundred and fifty years. The lands of the people were confiscated, their religion persecuted and proscribed under the worst penal code which has existed since the days of Nero and Domitian.

Home Rule or national autonomy or independence has been sought for earnestly by the Irish people to remedy

the bad government to which they have been subjected, and Home Rule is still demanded as the only means whereby they can be well governed. We have no doubt that it will yet be gained, though it has hitherto eluded their grasp, even at the moment when under the government of the late Wm. E. Gladstone, it seemed to be actually within reach. Yet in recent years wiser legislation has done much towards improving the condition of the people, and there is to day a better feeling approaching that cordiality which was eloquently called by Mr. Gladstone "a union of hearts," between the people of the three kingdoms.

The Irish in foreign lands, such as the United States, being the children of those who were driven by the oppressive administration of bad laws, from their own country, entertain still an intense hatred of those laws, and of their oppressors; but in Canada it is recognized that all stand on an equality before the law, and Irishmen and their children living here willingly admit that British rule has been favorable to their liberty and progress, and a spirit of loyalty to the laws exist. We hope that these facts indicate the approach of the new era which will make Ireland also prosperous, contented, and loyal.

SAVONAROLA.

Our attention has been called to a brief summary of a lecture delivered in Montreal on Feb. 18 by Mr. J. F. Waters on Savonarola, the celebrated Florentine Dominican, who was put to death on May 23rd, 1498, for his disobedience to the decree of Pope Alexander VI. prohibiting him from exercising priestly functions.

Mr. Waters in dealing with this subject unhesitatingly defends Savonarola, and denounces Alexander VI. for having treated the remarkable monk with undue harshness. He unsparingly denounces Pope Alexander as "the most infamous among the few darkened names in the long line of the Roman Pontiffs," and declares that Savonarola did not deserve the fate to which he was subjected "at the bidding of a man like Alexander Borgia."

It has been, indeed, the fashion to stigmatize Pope Alexander VI. as a Pontiff of infamous character, and even many Catholic writers have admitted that such was the case, but historical documents have been discovered which establish that he has been much maligned, and that instead of being the wicked pontiff he is commonly represented to be, he was really an ornament to the Pontifical throne; and even the Protestant historian Roscoe has vindicated him from the misrepresentations which have been uttered against him.

It is commonly said that before his elevation to the papedom, he cohabited with a Roman woman named Vanozza or Giulia Farnese. The truth of the matter is that he was at that time an officer in the army, and Giulia Farnese was his lawful wife, by whom he had several children, of whom the best known in history were his son, Caesar, and his daughter, Lucretia Borgia, whose characters have also been greatly blackened by their enemies.

We admit freely that Savonarola from the beginning of his public career was honestly desirous of effecting reforms in the State, but when he gained the highest political power, his mind appears to have become unsettled, and he became grossly disobedient to the supreme authority of the head of the Church. This was a grave fault in a monk who had taken solemn vows of obedience to his ecclesiastical superiors.

Savonarola was, of course, bound by his vows to obey the Pope's decrees, but, instead of submitting to those, he assumed the character of a prophet and claimed to have revelations from God which set him above the supreme authority of the Pope, and he even became so intolerably abusive toward the Pope that it was necessary to restrain him. It was, indeed, not merely the right, but it was the undoubted duty of the Pope to order him to refrain from the wild course he thought it proper to pursue, and to cease preaching in the Church.

Savonarola was, indeed, in the beginning, honest in his convictions, but he became a mistaken enthusiast whom it was necessary to prohibit from meddling in politics, and preaching and teaching dangerous follies when ordered by the supreme head of the Church to desist.

On the 25th of July, 1505, the Pope sent to Savonarola a Papal Brief directing him to come to Rome by virtue of obedience to the supreme authority of the head of the Church, and to give an

account of his prophecies, which he claimed to be divine revelations. He was certainly bound to obey this order, and the fact that the people believed him to be really a prophet did not justify his disobedience. A second Brief was sent to him on September 8th, reproaching him for his disobedience, and forbidding him to preach, under penalty of excommunication if he refused still to obey.

On the 29th of the same month Savonarola declared that he would submit to the Pope's decree. Nevertheless, on the 15th and 26th October he appeared in the pulpit of his church and preached under protection of the civil power. On the 11th of February, 1496, and on the 17th of the same month, he again appeared in the pulpit and preached during the whole Lent, and abused the Pope with most offensive invectives.

He forgot entirely the respect due to the supreme authority in the Church, and even if the charges of wickedness which he brought against the Pope had been correct, he had no right to dispute the Pope's jurisdiction over him. He claimed to have a divine mission, but the best evidence he could have given that he had such a mission would have been to submit to the authority appointed by God over the whole Church.

In the following November the Pope appointed Cardinal Caraffa vicar of all the Dominican convents in Tuscany and Rome, thus superseding the disobedient Savonarola, who still refused to obey this decree, and though the Pope treated Savonarola with great consideration and kindness, the obstinate monk became more and more abusive against the Pope during 1497 and 1498. It was, indeed, due largely to the offensive language of Savonarola and his partisans in Florence that many of the outrageous slanders which have been brought against Alexander VI. were circulated. He accused the Pope of being "a simoniacal, a heretic and an infidel," and accused him of other crimes which have been since constantly reiterated against Alexander by the enemies of the Pope's authority.

It was a Franciscan friar who challenged the Dominican partisans of Savonarola to an ordeal by fire, as a test of the claims of the Dominican to have a divine mission; but the Pope gave orders that the proposition should not be carried out. The Signoria of Florence, growing tired of the wrangling which took place between the contending parties, brought the matter to a close and the disputants were sent home, under an injunction to keep the peace.

Savonarola continued his preaching on the following Palm Sunday, but his popularity was now on the wane, and there was a riot, his sermon being violently interrupted, and Francesco Valori, one of his partisans, was slain. The cloister of Saint Mark was taken by storm, and Savonarola and his partisans, Fra Sylvestro and Fra Domenico were sent to prison to be afterward brought to trial for their contumacy.

The punishment inflicted was a cruel one, but it was not ordered by the Pope, as the enemies of Alexander VI. have asserted. The sentence was pronounced by the Florentine Court of the Signoria, and the three prisoners were first strangled, after which their bodies were cremated. The ashes were then cast into the river Arno, so that the adherents of Savonarola would not have the relics to honor them as the relics of Saints. The sentence was cruel, but we cannot fairly judge of the manners of four centuries ago by the rules of judicature of the present generation; and at all events it is unjust to hold the Church or Pope Alexander accountable for the sentence passed upon Savonarola by the Florentine Court.

It cannot be denied that Savonarola was a remarkable man, but we do not see that there is good reason for regarding him as one of the world's heroes. The only reason for which he is so regarded by many seems to be because his strange and eventful history gives an opportunity to those who hate the Pope and aim at destroying the Pope's authority, to malign one Pope, who, from living at a troubled period of civil and ecclesiastical history, had many enemies. It is worthy of remark, however, that even if the character of Alexander VI. had been as black as it has been represented to be, it would not affect the perpetuity and stability of the faith of the head of the Church. It is admitted that Pope Alexander preserved the purity of Catholic doctrine amid all the vicissitudes of the troubled time at which he lived. It must be remembered also that the doctrine of the infallibility of

the Pope does not regard his personal life and virtues, but it consists in his preserving the doctrines of the Church pure and undefiled: that is to say, the infallibility of the Pope means that he necessarily preserves the purity of doctrine as handed down from the days of the Apostles, or, as expressed by the decree of the Vatican Council:

"The Pope is an infallible teacher, in all doctrines concerning faith and morals, which he defines as pastor and teacher of all Christians."

THE MONTREAL UNIVERSITY TROUBLES.

The riotous conduct which took place in Montreal on the part of the students of the universities of McGill and Laval, on the occasion of the public rejoicings for the relief of Ladysmith, on March 1st, and which for the time caused considerable ill feeling between the English and French Canadian sections of the population, are greatly to be regretted. We believe, however, and fervently hope that the ill-blood which has been stirred up by the untoward event has already entirely passed away.

The prime cause of the riot was the excessive enthusiasm of the McGill students. People generally are disposed to overlook easily the freaks of students, and such freaks are all the more readily pardoned when the occasion is one which is calculated to excite a feeling of great and general joy. The relief of Ladysmith after enduring for four months the horrors of a close siege was undoubtedly an occasion which should naturally bring joy irrepressible to the hearts of British subjects throughout the British Empire, and we are not surprised that when a crowd of students let themselves loose upon the city of Montreal to express their triumph, they were surprised that the Union Jack was not spontaneously erected upon the City Hall, but they too readily drew the conclusion that the omission was a deliberate slight to Great Britain. The cause of the omission was easily explained. Alderman Sadler, a member of the City Hall committee, explained that he had come to the Hall for the purpose of having the flag raised. It is, however, the special prerogative of the Mayor to order the flag to be raised, and as Mayor Prefontaine was not in the city when the public determined on the celebration, and it was impossible to make out the whereabouts of the Mayor for some time, an unavoidable delay occurred in the matter. The students here became uproarious, and it was owing to the good nature of the city officials that a row was not then precipitated. Alderman Sadler, however, took it on himself to give orders to have the flag raised, and about the same time Mayor Prefontaine gave a similar order, and the trouble was apparently over for the time being.

The Mayor soon arrived personally on the scene and addressed the students patriotically, thanking them for their manifestations of loyalty, and declaring that we must all rejoice together as British subjects at the relief of Ladysmith. As already there had been some signs manifested of a tendency to rioting, the Mayor added:

"I must ask you as good British citizens to respect the law and the rights and property of your fellow-citizens. I am sure you will not disgrace the occasion by any illegal act. Though, unlike most of you, I am not of British ancestry, I rejoice with you in the success achieved by the brave army under General Buller, because I am a British subject. I hope with you that where blood has been shed so freely for the cause of liberty and justice, good will result to the British Empire and humanity."

Cheers were heartily then given for the Queen, General Roberts and Buller and Canada's soldiers, and finally for the Mayor.

So far nothing very objectionable could be found in the conduct of the students, but from the City Hall they proceeded to Laval University, on which there had been no flag raised, and it appears that at first the authorities at Laval made no serious objection to the raising of a flag by the McGill students, nor did they even take seriously their riotous conduct, for a flag which they raised was allowed to remain nearly all day flying from the Laval tower. The Laval authorities and students, however, must have regarded this obtrusiveness as a piece of impertinence, though there was no disposition to raise a quarrel in regard to the raising of the flag.

Now, it may be asked, why had not the authorities at Laval already thought of raising a flag upon the university? It has been universally admitted by the English as well as the French press that there is no suspicion

of disloyalty against either the authorities and students of Laval or against the French Canadian people, from amongst whom soldiers enlisted for the South Africa contingents as freely as from amongst the English speaking population of Canada, and in fact one of the Canadian companies which suffered most and distinguished itself most honorably in the recent battles, is made up entirely of French Canadians. Hence, it was certainly not through defect of loyalty that the authorities of Laval had not raised the flag, but probably because they did not advert to that special method of displaying their loyalty.

The McGill students, however, not content with what they had done, proceeded to the French newspaper offices to destroy their bulletin boards, and insist upon their raising of British flags also. This obtrusive loyalty seems to have caused the burning out of the flames.

It so happens that a day or two previous, the victory of Gen. Roberts over Cronje had been actually celebrated by the raising of flags over the Patrie and Journal offices, and now both were even intending at that very moment to raise them again, and actually did so, but at the Presse office there was no flag staff, and the flag was not raised at once, wherefore the disorderly manifestations were renewed and windows were broken in the office and other outrages committed, many employees being badly hurt.

The Presse itself in referring to the matter said:

"For years past our journal has hoisted no flag, for the good reason that there is no staff on our building. Any respectable citizen who had come to ask us to hoist anything would have been favorably received by us, to celebrate the relief of Ladysmith, since such an act would have been in keeping with our own sentiments, and a deep conviction, for in General White who held so long against formidable forces, such a weakly fortified city as Ladysmith, we see a real hero, worthy of universal admiration."

But further it declares that it is unwilling to accept of a brutal campaign from a mob of madmen, for "we are quite as jealous of our liberty as are any other British subject, and we are masters at home as the bulldog in his kennel."

We regret to have to record here two other incidents in connection with the affair which had disagreeable features. The first was an attack made by the McGill students on Laval University on Thursday night. A crowd estimated at 4,000 persons, the leaders being McGill students, marched to Laval once more to enforce the re-raising of their flag. They were received by the Laval students, by streams of water which were poured upon the assailants from the University windows by means of engines. Windows were broken and much other damage done before the assailants were driven off by the police, but after some trouble quiet was restored.

The next incident was a sequel to that we have just related. The Laval students, roused to anger by what occurred on Thursday night, organized a procession of their own on Friday, and procured a British flag which they insisted should be again raised on the office of the Patrie, but some hot-headed person afterward raised a French tricolor over it, and there was some cheering, and some person threw down and treated the British flag with insult.

This was done by the Laval students, but by workmen who had joined in the crowd. We must strongly disapprove of this insult to the British flag. But it must be remembered that it cannot be expected that French Canadian loyalty should be quite as demonstrative as that of British Canadians, and when we remark that the tricolor of France was insulted during the McGill demonstration, we may explain this unpleasant episode by the anger and repulsion excited by the McGill students' aggressiveness.

French Canadian loyalty is admitted in England and by the Queen, and it is satisfactory to English statesmen. That should be enough to keep British Canadians from putting it to such a severe test as to raise from time to time an anti French agitation. Be it remembered that civil loyalty will not bear too severe a strain in any case. But as the Laval students themselves carried the British flag at the head of their procession, and saluted the statue of the Queen most enthusiastically as they passed it on Victoria Square, they showed sufficiently that they did not intend any disrespect either to the flag or to Her Majesty personally.

Since these occurrences, the Laval students met on the 7th inst. and unanimously passed a resolution to the effect that they have seen with pleasure

that the troubles have come to an end, which almost brought Montreal to civil war. They declare that in all circumstances they are loyal to the British Crown, and that in their demonstration on Friday they had no other purpose than to protest respectfully against an uncalled for outrage, and a gratuitous insult to their university.

We can only add that the whole occurrence was a disagreeable and regrettable one which we hope will not mar the future good feelings of the Montreal citizens of both races.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

The Right Rev. Bernard McQuaid, Bishop of Rochester, N. Y., at the annual meeting of the Cathedral School Alumni, of the same city, among whom are many distinguished citizens, thus gave expression to certain sentiments which he entertains in regard to the extension of the franchise to women.

In a few generations the Catholics will be thoroughly assimilated, and American to the marrow of the bone and the core of the heart. They will never in arrogant fear bow the head or submit uncomplainingly to wrong and injustice. Very likely, by that time, the women of the country would have the right of suffrage, and that if fathers and brothers and husbands were timid and afraid to speak their minds, the mothers of the children of the day, with braver souls and a more tender conscience, would not hesitate to stand up boldly for what was dear to their souls, the best welfare of the offspring of their own flesh and blood.

The Bishop spoke eloquently of the influence for good that he foresaw in the women when they exercise the right of suffrage.

Though he did not plainly express in this opinion to the effect that it would be advisable thus to extend the franchise, he was understood by many as favoring that it should be thus extended, and he was interviewed at the Bernard's Seminary by a representative of the Post-Express for the purpose of ascertaining definitely his views upon this subject. The Bishop expressed himself as follows:

"No; I do not favor woman suffrage. But I believe it is coming. And I may add that I do not fear it: for when it is secured, women who take advantage of it will be found on the right side."

"What indications are there to lead you to believe that woman suffrage is to be realized?"

"Oh, all signs point that way. Remarks on Monday night were a nature of prophecy. There is a constant tendency to broader and more liberal views on this as on other questions."

"