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St. James Street.

## MONTREAL, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1901. Vol. LI., No. 23

- Topics of the Week &

purific of his Advent pastoral letter the Right Rev. Dr. Isley, Bishop of rmingham, Rng., says :--The position of a Catholic minor-

in a Protestant country like urs will always be a position of ficulty and danger. Amongst the ngers arising out of this position there is one against which we would especially warn our faithful latty. We refer to the danger of their adopting, to a greater or less extent, the attitude which those amongst whom they live assume in regard to whom they live assume in regard to maintenance of their churches and of the clergy who minister in them. would be a fatal error if the garded like the wrinisters of other nominations, in the light of a salaried official; or the church he serves and the funds he administers as the property of the lasty; they are ecclesiastical property, and are subject only to the supervision the Bishou, in whose name and by whose authority the priest acts, and to whom alone, under God, he is hound to render an account of his stewardship. In contributing to the table maintenance of the priest. and in furnishing the meterial means for carrying on the necessary work of the mission, the laity should never forget that the money they thus supply they really give to God, in the person of His minister, and that henceforth it becomes a sacred thing, the ownership and administration of which are vested in the Church, and not in the original donors or their representatives. Moreover, the laity should never allow themselves to be tempted to imitate the example of those around them, and withhold their offering or dimsh its just amount, because they may happen to disapprove of the manner in which it is administered, or of the priest who administers it. Their duty to support the pastor who is placed over them and the nission in which they reside is indendent of and superior to all such onsiderations, and is imposed upon them by the very law of nature and

We have observed, however, that of late there has grown up a tendency in certain quarters to discuss the layman's position in the Church and to encourage him to intrude even into the domain of the sanctu ary. It is against the encroachments of this uncatholic spirit that we would warn you. We welcome, and are grateful for, the valuable our leity who, at the invitation of the clergy, give to the Church the benefit of their business talents and perience, and place at her disposal so much of their time and energy; ut we know that it would not tend to their own peace of mind, nor to the advancement of the sacred cause they have at heart, if they should be led to regard themselves in other light than that of co-operators, working with, and in subordination to, and under the direction of, their pastors. In the various sects around you this may not be regarded as a sufficiently honorable position for educated and wealthy men to occupy, but in the Catho-lic Church the highest-placed layman, if he had the true Catholic spirit, rightly deems it an honor and a privilege to be associated with God's priest in works of piety and religion, even though it be a subordinate capacity.

by divine positive enactment.

GOOD COUNSEL .- At the recen annual dinner of the Benevolent Society, held in London, Eng., His Lordship Mr. Justice Walton presided. In outlining some of the aims of the organization, His Lordship

said:

He thought it a very good thing that the society should bring them together in friendly and social gathering. He was certain it was true, as had often been said by one whom they had recently lost, and for whom he always had the greatest whom he always had the greatest possible reverence and affection—he possible reverence and affection—he referred to Lord Russell of Killowen—that if Catholics succeeded as they should do in this city one thing was wanted, and that was a greater unity. The more they could see of one another, the more they could see of one another, the more that latives and see of the cleary at mathematical.

DUTIES OF LAITY. - In the like that, the better it would be for them, the stronger would be their position, and the greater would be the success they would attain in every undertaking which they had in mand.

The history of the Benevolent Society, although its records were not

very voluminous, was still very interesting. It was founded in 1761. and that was a period when to be a Catholic was to be a criminal, when for a priest to say Mass was a capital offence, and when a Catholic sent a child to a Catholic school it was a capital offence which might entail forfeiture of all he possessed. It was a good thing if the society coupled them up and limited them with callers of old days those who lived before the establishment of the Wierarchy, before Catholic emancipation in those old days when priests and laity struggled and fought for their religion, and it was a matter of satisfaction to them that they were now carrying on a work which was begun in those old days by the "Heroes" who kept alive the light

There were two forms of benevo lence in particular which were to be commended. One was the assistance of children—the children of poor Catholic parents-in their education, so that they would be prepar ed to succeed as far as possible in the battle of life. He was glad to see a spirit arising-it was a resurrection, a renewal-of the spirit which was common in the old days of rising to the importance of doing something for the education of Cath-olic boys in the higher schools in the way of establishing exhibitions and scholarships, so that the boys of parents who were not overburdened with the goods of this world might have an opportunity of continuing their education to properly equip them for their battle in life.

THE ONLY SECURITY. -As we look back some three decades to the day of our First Communion we are deeply impressed with the force of the following remarks which recent-

sociated with the picture in the pu-pil's mind. I insist that the gradu-ates of our public schools to-day good spellers, and will, I believe.

Rufus M. Hitch said : "There are two classes of spellers- the tolerable and intolerable. Does it pay to be a tolerable speller? I think it does. My wish is that the spelling picturesque English may never be lost. Can we teach children to spell by symbols? Yes, if never be lost. Can we teach children to spell by symbols? Yes, if they are deaf and dumb. If not, no."

W. E. Watt said: "The word method of teaching spelling is not bethough his swn'experience disproves the truth of the assertion."

cannot spell as well as the children compare favorably, with any chilof one or two generations ago. I dren. The opponents of spelling rewant you to go back to the good form have put up men of straw here old system of analytical spelling." to-day and thrashed them. They have based many of their arguments

on conditions which do not exist," E. O. Vail said : "Spelling is not an index to ability, as Mr. Thompson has said. He said he is by nature an incorrigibly bad speller, but

## GREAT CHANGES IN IRELAND DURING FIFTY YEARS.

Fifty-three years age an Irish stripling bade adieu to his parents in the brisk little market town of Graigue, county Kilkenny, and joined the nameless thousands of Irish youths who were flocking to America. He came to Rochester, N. Y. and after many vicissitudes which were common to the experiences of immigrants in a strange land, he finally found himself setfled in a comfortable coal business. He found a wife in the new land also, and in course of time sens and daughters were born to him, but through the years he kept as fresh and green in his mind as the sod of the Emerald Isle the memory of the home and dear ones he had left behind.

The side are laborer's cottage an acre of land anywhere he sees it. Upon these plots, which are given the poor taborers to till, comfortable houses of stone are built, sanitary and wholesome. "I found also that the farms held by tenants have fairly doubled in size since I lived there. Some people even have returned from America and have taken up farms, attracted by the high price which is paid for pork used in making Irish bacon, which is greatly in demand, though why it should be considered superior to American bacon I cannot understand. When I was in the country live hogs were bringing 12½ control and the pounds of the Emerald Isle the memory of the home and dear ones he had left behind.

The saddening thing about the country, however, is its absence of young men. They are all gone, and were common to the experiences of immigrants in a strange land, he finally found himself settlled in a comfortable coal business. He found a wife in the new land also, and in course of time sens and daughters were born to him, but through the years he kept as fresh and green in his mind as the sod of the Emerald Isle the memory of the home and dear ones he had left behind.

Thus it came to pass that one

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years he kept as fresh and green in his mind as the sod of the Emerald Isle the memory of the home and dear ones he hed left behind.

Thus it came to pass that one bright morning last September, Martin Barron of this city, says the Rochester (N.Y.) "Poet Expres," found himself again in the little market town of his youth, with six short weeks before him in which to visit his surviving relatives and renew the acquaintance of such old friends as were left.

Mr. Barron is a cultured man — a fine type of the "rale ould Irish gentlemm." To a lifelong love for and familiarity with books, he adds a remarkably keen faculty for observations. A "Poet-Express" reporter found him one morning sitting in his business office, surrounded with the evidences of his literary tastes, which he keeps always near his hand. He appeared delighted to talk about his recent visit, and said:

"When I left the old country my father and mother, one sister and four brothers were living. When I went back unannounced last fall, I found only my sister alive, but in the interval of half a century which had elapsed, I discovered that I had acquired five nices, six nephews and more than 200 cousins. Fully one-fourth of the population of Graigue is related to me either by first or second ties of blood.

"The country live beers a pound.

"The saddening thing about the country, however, is its absence of young men. They are all gone, and no one is left to carry on business that beare by oung men. They are all gone, and no one is left to carry on business of the dandeone, intelligent, well educated young wenen doing all the light work about the farms, in addition to their inevitable household duties. It is a cruel burden, almost immorated burden, almost immo

The Witness

none of our folks ever wore a beard such as this gentleman wears. No, ye'll not get me to believe that this is Martie."

It took a long time to persuade the old lady that time might have made such changes in "Martie" as it had in herself, but her skepticism could hold out no longer when, once within the cosey farm bouse of cism could hold out no longer when, once within the cosey farm house of his boyhood, Mr. Barron showed her a picture of his wife, the mate to which his sister possessed; and also presented to her a fine silk umbretla, the gift of her nephew in America, Dr. William M. Barren. Then the old lady's hysterical joy, expressed half in laughter, half in

the old lady's hysterical joy, expressed half in laughter, half in tears, broke forth in all the vehemence of her lrish nature.

During the two weeks that followed, Mr. Barron set out most systematically to gather what information he could concerning the condition of the country and the history of his old friends and neighbors.

"I hired a jaunting car," said he, "and spent seven days in travelling out as many different country roads. I gave instructions to my driver to I gave instructions to my driver to stop every man, woman and child we met on the road, while I had a bit of a talk with them. I drove up to the farmhouses, too, and talked with the folks there, besides calling on all priests in the neighborhood. I also called on a Mr. Birchall, the local magistrate, with whom I had had some correspondence in this country in the matter of settling up the estate of Irish immigrants who had died here. He was the fifth generation of his family who had held the office of magistrate. We had a fine visit together.

fine visit together.
"I also visited the markets and fine visit together.

"I alse visited the markets and the fairs, talking with everybody that I could, and in this manner I think I am safe in saying that I picked up more information about the country and its people in the few days I was thus engaged, than a person could ordinarily pick up in two years. If some of the farmers I called on were not at home, I left word for them to come to town and take dinner with me, and in this way I usually had two people at table with me, and on one occasion as many as six."

The English, Mr. Barron thinks, are beginning to realize the mistake they have made in discouraging manufacturing industries in Ireland, and he believes a reactionary sentiment is setting in that angurs well for the fluture of the country.

## ROME AND THE UNITED STATES.

From this week's correspondence of 'Innoraminato," the Romancorres-

greeted with greatest favor and applause. The French people alone showed equal sympathy. The German newspapers expressed their old dislike for American imperialism. The statesmen and theorists of de-many fear the coming of the new American hegemony in the world. The United States, with their com-pact territory, their economic self-The statesmen and theorists of Gerpact territory, their economic self-sufficiency, and their excess of vital-ity seem to be the new power, the new civilization that will prevail.

PRICE FIVE CENTS

## The School Question In New York.

In the last issue of the Chicago 'inter-Ocean," Col. Alex. K. Mc-Clure tells the story of W. H. Seward's political battles, and from that s'etch of the American stateman's career we take the following significant extracts :-

"It was Seward's attitude on the school question when Governor of New York that made his election impossible in 1860. He was a man of liberal ideas and positive convic-tions, and when he was nominated for Governor in 1838 he was given for Governor in 1838 he was given important support by the quiet effects of Archbishop John Hughes, then the ablest prelate of the Catholic Church of America. The question has been superficially discussed, and I think it due to the truth of history to present the actual political condition that confronted the Republican leaders at Chicago in 1860 by giving Seward's own utterances on the school question. In his annual message to the Legislature, Jan. 7, 1840, he said:

Jan. 7, 1840, he said:
"The children of foreigners, found in great numbers in our populous cities and towns and in the vicinity cities and towns and in the vicinity of our public works, are too often deprived of the advantages of our system of public education in consequence of prejudice arising from a difference of language or religion. It ought never to be forgotten that the public welfare is as deeply concerned in their education as in that of our own children. I do not hesitate, therefore, to recommend the establishment of schools in which they may be instructed by teachers speaking the same language with themselves and professing the same faith."

Seward's message on the subject

faith."

Seward's message on the subject was very elaborate, reviewing the whole question of educating the children of the State with great earnestness and force. In the same message he said that the issue was "whether parents have a right to be heard concerning the instruction and instructors of their children, and taxpayers in relation to the expenditure of public funds; whether in a Republican Government it is necessary to interpose an independent