

# A Famous Irish Shrine.

**R**ESTING amid magnificent elms and beeches on a knoll overlooking the Shannon, in the very centre of Ireland, stands a building which, dating its foundation in the sixth century, is now approaching complete restoration. Surrounding it is a church yard, the gravestones of which are in themselves monuments of antiquity, and yet they are infants in comparison with the small but beautiful structure standing in their midst. The building is Clonfert Cathedral.

Here our footsteps touch the threshold of the dawn of Christianity in the British Islands. While Anglia was still wrapped in the darkness of heathenism, the light of the new Ibernia; and it was here, on this very spot, that St. Brendan nearly 1,400 years ago laid the foundations of a monastery, of which the present cathedral is the successor. Here in the chancel lie his bones, and they have a jealous guardian in the present rector of the parish, the Rev. Canon McLarny.

The romance of religion was never better illustrated than in the career of St. Brendan and in the history of the cathedral which enshrines its remains. The saint is known as "the navigator," and he is the patron saint of sailors. He was born at Tralee, in Kerry, in the year 481. At an early period of his life he crossed to Great Britain, and thence to France, founding monasteries or schools in his progress. But it was not until 545 that he undertook the voyage with which his name is chiefly associated. This event, which was called "the Setting Sail of St. Brendan and his Crew," was commemorated in the calendars of the Christian Church on March 22 every year for many centuries afterwards.

**VOYAGE TO AMERICA.**—Whether did the saint sail and what did he discover? This is a question upon which light has only recently been thrown. The late Bishop of Iowa, at a meeting in Dublin a few years ago, asserted that St. Brendan not only landed in America 900 years before Columbus was born, but also evangelized a portion of the country at that time. It is certain that the voyage lasted altogether a period of seven years.

The belief that St. Brendan was the first European to visit America rests upon a number of isolated but significant facts. That the Icelanders and the Norsemen preceded Columbus is generally admitted; and when Columbus required information about his proposed voyage he sought it in Iceland and Ireland. One of the sailors whom he took to America was an Irishman named Patrick Maguire. Maritime intercourse between Ireland and Iceland was frequent from the earliest days of navigation. To various voyagers from time to time the great western continent was known as "Ireland the Great" (Ireland ed Mikla).

Professor Rafn, of Copenhagen, is of opinion that this Great Ireland of the Northmen was the country south of Chesapeake Bay, including Carolina, Georgia, and East Florida. There is a remarkable tradition preserved among the Shawanese Indians, who emigrated more than a century ago from West Florida to Ohio, that "Florida was once inhabited by white men who used iron instruments." Traces of Irish origin have been observed among some of the original tribes of North and Central America, which suggest a presumption that those countries had been colonized from Ireland at some remote period.

**A DISCOVERY BY CORTEZ.**—The history of early Irish Christian missions to America affords another proof of that country having been discovered by St. Brendan 900 years before Columbus was born. In the year 1519, when Cortez and his six hundred companions landed in Mexico, they were surprised to find that their coming was welcomed by the Mexicans as the realization of an ancient native tradition to the effect that many centuries before, a white man had come across the great ocean from the northeast in a boat with "wings" (sails) like those of the Spanish vessels.

In the year 558, six years after St. Brendan's return to Ireland from his voyage to America, he founded the Cathedral of Clonfert, in County Galway. When he came to Clonfert he said: "This shall be my rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein." When he was dying at Annaghdown, near Galway, on May 16, 577, when he was ninety-six years of age, one of his last requests was: "Bury me in my dear city of Clonfert." His wish

was granted. He was buried in the place of honor; in the chancel of the Cathedral.

Clonfert Cathedral has suffered so many vicissitudes during the long period of 1,343 years of its existence that it is surprising anything ancient has remained. It suffered greatly from the incursions of the Danes, who frequently sailed up the River Shannon from Limerick and attacked it. It was burnt six times between the years 949 and 1065. In the year 1541 it was almost totally destroyed. Bishop Wolley repaired the Cathedral in the year 1064. From that time up to the present no general restoration was undertaken till Canon McLarny took the work in hand.

**A VANISHED CITY.**—There is now no city of Clonfert; there is not even a village. In ancient times a city did exist, and was celebrated as a seat of learning. The present University of Dublin narrowly escaped being established on this spot because, being so central in the island, it was considered a convenient place for students to assemble. With the exception of the Bishop's Palace, now a private residence, and a single cottage, the Cathedral stands alone. War, revolution, tribal feuds, industrial stagnation, fire, famine, and pestilence have done their work with exceeding thoroughness. Not even a vestige of the former city can be traced. The parish of Clonfert, although twenty-seven Irish miles in circumference, contains a very small population. It is dotted about with a few private houses and a number of cabins; yet the land is good, and the scenery is of great sylvan beauty. There is, indeed, no part of Ireland that is fairer to look upon.

One of the curiosities of Clonfert is the yew tree avenue, planted in the form of a cross. This is supposed, judging from the size of the trees, to be hundreds of years old. It presents at this moment a remarkable beautiful appearance, and is certainly a unique spectacle.

The war has greatly interfered with the collection of the funds still necessary to complete the restoration.

It certainly would be a pity that an ancient historic cathedral, which has been used as a place of worship for 1,343 years, should be allowed to decay. Clonfert Cathedral having been founded in the year 558, existed as a place of worship thirty-nine years before St. Augustine landed in England, and thus dates before Canterbury Cathedral, York Minster, Winchester Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Salisbury Cathedral, or many of the ancient cathedrals existing at the present day.—Robert Dennis, in the Daily Telegraph, Quebec.

## REMARKS ABOUT OLD MEN!

Discussing the question "When is a man too old to work," a New York daily points out that it gets letters by the score from those who say they have been shoved aside to make room for younger men.

It seems, however, that despite his sixty-six years Lyman J. Gage, who has retired from the Treasury Department, has had four good jobs offered him, with salaries attached ranging from \$25,000 to \$50,000.

Useless old men are not wanted these days. Useful old men are. Mr. Gage is only one instance. There are hundreds of other men past the threescore mark filling positions of highest importance and filling them well. Chauncey Depew, John Wanamaker, John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, George F. Hoar, Hiram Maxim, Bishop Potter and Levi P. Morton are all past sixty—some of them past seventy—and yet they are among the most useful and active men in the country.

How old a man is depends largely on himself. If an old man is not wanted in a position he has occupied for years it is not because of his years or his gray hairs. It is because he has lost interest and ambition, because he has made no effort to keep up to the times, because he has grown careless. Useful men are always in demand, no matter when they were born.

In Montreal, in many of our Catholic parishes, the men who have crossed the half century period are the leaders in our most important enterprises, and they are the mainstay of our educational and charitable institutions.

If the enthusiastic, vigorous and loyal "old men" are to be criticized it might be in the direction that they do not, in some instances, make the "young men" of to-day take a more prominent and active interest in the important affairs of the parishes to which they belong. The "old men" are alright in every other respect, and the evidences of this fact are nowhere to be noticed so abundantly as in Montreal.

We may also add, and with good reason too, that no stronger evidence could be produced to show the deep interest which the "old men" take in matters generally, and in all that concerns the Catholic press in particular, than that furnished by them in the thousands of letters which they send to the "True Witness" during the course of a year.

## BLOOD TROUBLES.

MANIFEST THEMSELVES IN MANY DISAGREEABLE WAYS.

Such as Scrofula, Eczema, Boils and Pimples—The Blood Should Be Purified During the Spring Months.

The Spring season is the time for blood cleansing and blood renewing. Blood troubles are many—and dangerous—and manifest themselves in a score of painful and offensive ways, such as scrofula, eczema, boils and pimples. The impurities that get into the blood pursue their poisonous way all over the body and are responsible for a large proportion of all diseases, various in their nature, but dangerous in the extreme. To have pure blood and plenty of it, you need a tonic and blood builder, and for this purpose there is nothing can equal Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. These pills cure all diseases due to impurities in the blood by promptly cleansing and freeing the blood from all poisonous and offensive matter. If your blood is thin or insufficient; if you suffer from exhaustion at the least exertion; if you are pale, easily get out of breath, and feel constantly languid and fagged out, Dr. Williams' Pink Pills will cure you by filling your veins with new, rich, red blood. Mr. Robt. Lee, New Westminster, B.C., says:—"Before I began using Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, my blood was in a very impure state, and as a result, pimples, which were very itchy, broke out all over my body. My appetite was fickle and I was easily tired. I tried several medicines, but they did not help me. Then my wife urged me to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. I got a half dozen boxes and by the time I had used them I was completely restored to health, and my skin was smooth and clear. I shall always speak a good word for these pills when opportunity offers."

It is because these pills make rich, red blood that they cure such troubles as anaemia, shortness of breath, headache, palpitation of the heart, rheumatism, erysipelas, St. Vitus' dance, and the functional ailments that make the lives of so many women a source of constant misery. The genuine pills always bear the full name, "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People," on the wrapper on every box. Sold by all dealers, or sent by mail at \$2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

**THE POINT OF VIEW.**

How much the possession of happiness depends upon the point of view we choose to take in seeing things! He who determines to look on the bright side of affairs will generally find that some brightness is visible; he who wants to point out to himself and others that discouragements abound, can, as a rule, succeed to his own satisfaction in the gloomy pursuit. There is such a thing as curbing one's natural tendency to depression and in wholesome fashion casting lamentable melancholy out of doors, and one means to this end is mentally and spiritually to outgrow the necessity of being happy. The less one thinks of the deprivations and lack of those conditions which are commonly supposed to be requisites of happiness, and the less one cultivates a spirit of restless pursuit of happiness—a spirit which by its very lightness and delicacy eludes a harsh grasp—the more likely is happiness to come all unthought, particularly if one is more anxious about securing conditions of happiness for others than for one's self.

## With the Scientists.

**A CURIOUS RAINFALL.**—On Jan. 22 of this year rain fell at Periers in France for several hours. The rainwater collected looked like lye, or like water containing clay. It was odorless, of earthy taste and slightly saline. After twenty-four hours it precipitated an abundant deposit that was almost entirely silicious. Linen clothes and the leaves of plants were covered with a considerable silicious matter. As previous rains had thoroughly wetted the ground this phenomenon is not to be explained by supposing that a large amount of silicious dust had been carried into the air by winds and subsequently precipitated by rain. The most probable explanation is that the water of the preceding rains lay in very shallow pools on the surface of silicious ground and that by high winds (which were observed) the water was raised into the air and subsequently descended as rain.

**BIRDS AAD BUTTERFLIES.**—A correspondent of "Nature" gives the following instances of birds attacking butterflies:—"On a dull, sunless day, I pointed out to Professor Gotch a fine fresh male specimen of the Holly Blue (*Lycena argiolus*) at rest on the leaf of a shrub behind the Oxford University Museum. Touching it with my finger, the butterfly rose and fluttered feebly along the curved walk in the park. At that moment a swallow (or a martin) came down the walk from the opposite direction at full speed. It must have seen the butterfly fluttering towards it from a considerable distance; for with the most perfect ease and control it diverted its course and took the insect in its sweep. I felt, as I saw it, that only by good fortune was it possible thus to obtain the most direct evidence of events which are probably continually occurring. There are, however, other means by which evidence can be obtained. One is the examination of the crops of dead birds. Although we should be sorry for British birds to be killed with this object (except in special circumstances), it is much to be hoped that the observations will be made when birds are killed, whether accidentally or otherwise. Mr. R. Newstead of the Chester Museum, has done excellent work in this way; but there can be no doubt that, taking the country as a whole, only an insignificant proportion of the obtainable evidence is utilized. Another line of evidence is afforded by specimens of butterflies which have their wings injured in a manner which is inconsistent with any interpretation except the snip of a bird's beak. Thus it is common to find fresh and unworn specimens with a notch or tear on the right side which exactly fits a corresponding injury on the left side, indicating that the wings had been torn when they were in contact. In one extreme instance, presented to the Hope Department by Dr. F. A. Dixey, a deep little notch had been cut out of all four wings of a 'Red Admiral' (*Vanessa atalanta*), the four injuries exactly coinciding in the true position of rest adopted by this insect.

Mr. W. Holland of the Hope Department tells me that about the middle of June, 1901, he saw a swallow swoop down from a great distance and catch a white butterfly (almost certainly *Pieris rapae*) flying in front of the museum. The bird took the insect in a single sweep and then dexterously avoided a collision, which seemed almost inevitable, with the roof of the 'Glasbury Kitchen.' Directly after the seizure of the butterfly Mr. Holland saw the wings fluttering to the ground, evidently cut through at their bases by the beak. Probably the kestrel preys extensively on the emperor moth, whose wings I have seen lying at the base of the small hummocks formed by the 'Juncus squarrosus' on the Orkney moorlands. These tufts were much used as nesting places by kestrels and hen harriers, but as neither hawk is capable of catching a bird on the wing, the moths were presumably captured while at rest. The black-headed gull feeds on the common ghost moth. Regularly every season, during many years, I saw some half-dozen or more of these gulls flying backwards and forwards, over the grass in front of my house, hawking after the white oscillating ghost moths in the long summer twilight of a calm Orcadian evening."

We are saved man by man, not in masses and corporately, as it were. It is not sufficient to profess our faith; it is not enough to be a Catholic; we must live our creed; and to live a creed that makes such demands as ours, means daily effort of the most difficult kind.

## BUSINESS TALKS.

**MR. T. D. BARRY,** the head and originator of a boot and shoe establishments, famous for a special class of shoe which it manufactures, and known by the name "Allright," is the subject of the following notice in Donahoe's Magazine. We reproduce it for the business lessons it contains.

Mr. Barry commenced to earn his own living at the age of ten years, and in the eighties was the proprietor of a shoe store in Randolph, and at the same time worked in a shoe factory as foreman. In 1889, he started the manufacture of slippers in Brockton in a small way and from this humble beginning, he has advanced as a shoe manufacturer until to-day his firm is doing a business of \$2,000,000 a year, which requires two factories.

The Barry Company turns out 3,500 pairs of shoes daily, and the demand is constantly expanding.

The firm consists of Mr. T. D. Barry, W. A. Hogan and Mr. Charles Barry, the latter, the son of the founder of the business. Mr. T. D. Barry is something of a European traveller, and on May 24 of last year was present in Rome at the canonization of two saints. He is exceedingly prominent in Catholic circles and socially one of the most companionable of men. As a business man he is the embodiment of hustling energy. Only such energy and ability as he has displayed could have won such a successful fruitage as his present vast business shows. Another feature of Mr. Barry's business methods is the fact that he invariably pays good wages, demands good service in return, and his employees work nine hours a day.

It is astonishing how soon the whole conscience begins to unravel if a single stitch drops; one single sin indulged in makes a hole you could put your head through.

## A PARLIAMENTARIAN AT NINETY-NINE.

An Ottawa correspondent of the "Daily Witness" contributes the following pen sketch of a centenarian Parliamentarian from which we take the following extracts:—He says: "The oldest member of any Parliament in the British Empire, and probably the oldest representative in any of the national assemblies of earth, is the Hon. David Wark, of Fredericton, New Brunswick, who entered during the week beginning Feb. 22, upon the ninety-ninth year of his career. Fifty-seven years ago he was chosen member for the County of Kent in the New Brunswick Legislature. After playing an active part in that body, he was raised on the confederation of the colonies of British North America to the Canadian Senate, which he has attended without interruption since 1867.

A marvellous monument to the results of regular habits and temperate living is the life of this man. At this age he is as clear of mind and as vigorous of frame as most men twenty years his junior. There is nothing that would offend him sooner than an offer of support. Sturdy independence has been a leading characteristic of his whole life. The very messenger who stepped forward to help him on with his coat would be waved back. The fire of the born reformer still shines in his eye. His last address in the Senate was a complaint that there was not given that branch of the legislature more to do.

Three-quarters of a century on American soil has not clouded his love for Ireland, the land of his birth. Mr. Wark's longevity comes of no fad practice. He has taken regular exercise and refrained from too vigorous indulgence in table delicacies. For years he has eaten but two meals a day—breakfast and tea—but in this, as well as all else, he has adhered to regularity.

In a letter written by his own hand the other day Senator Wark announces that he will probably be up to Ottawa for a portion of the session.

## DEMAND OF THE TIMES.

The world staves its prophets and crucifies its saviours, and then succeeding ages build monuments to their memory. The demand of the times is for cross bearers, for men who will "scorn delights and live laborious days," who will bear their backs to the lash of the victors and then go forth bearing their crosses.

## Business Cards.

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Many a man would like to begin the Christian life if he could only turn about when nobody was looking.

## Queer Ideas

**ABOUT THE PRIESTHOOD**  
readers of the "True Witness" generally, are familiar with the full and gem-like poems of Father Tabb. Like Father Tabb, "Poet-Priest of the South," Tabb has won a distinctive himself in the domain of literature. It is not an exaggeration to say that he possesses more living writer of verse, the power of condensation. We have seen Father Tabb's poems before; but we have "Pearson's," for March, which is a long extract from William Younger's volume entitled "Poet-Younger Generation." We do not pretend to contrast Mr. Tabb's sketch of Father Tabb, true account of the poet's cause, as already remarked, not all the data regarding before us, still we cannot most flagrant evidence of knowledge regarding the Church to go uncorrected. Mr. Archer, under the heading, "Mr. John B. Tabb," "The Forest," Amelia Couglin, March 22, 1845. civil war he served as a clerk in the Confederate army, "Robert E. Lee," two years, was captured and sent for about eight months to Lookout Prison, whence, my Lanier, he was exchanged before the war ended." This information goes, it is not exact, we have not supposed otherwise, and Mr. Archer is here writing about a great many other writers. His first blunder that touches the Catholic is any subject, or question, not connected with the continuing, in regard to Tabb, he says:—"He became a Catholic and was ordained a priest later. Since then, as for before, he has occupied St. Charles College, Elliptical, Maryland, teaching English."

No Catholic requires to thing about the life of Father Tabb to see that this must be in 1872 Father Tabb was three years of age. He was only twenty-five when priest, after two years in vicar of Mr. Archer's very hazy ideas regarding requirements of the Church, qualifications of the priest, in which a man can get preach after a few months. It might be possible the age of twenty-five, two years converted, entered a seminary to priesthood. Even then, that he could not have complete course of study the civil war, in which gaged, it would be but to surmise that he put of philosophy before his theological studies. altogether probable, the aged four, or even five, ology—the course in his rally being more extended best would make the date of his conversion, or in 1881. Then, occupying a chair of pro-Charles College, "some his conversion," it is probable—unless he had drawing, or engineer thing entirely foreign gious matters of study was evidently not a when engaged in militia.

We repeat that we have details of Father Tabb we know positively that not have been profess Charles for some years conversion; that he could be ordained priest before at least thirty years of he was a Protestant three; that Mr. Archer absolutely nothing Church and her rules a nor about the requirement to become a priest plays a deal of prejudice delicacy in calling Father name by which he is literature), "Mr. John and that this small pen from out a thousand, proves conclusive not competent to either Catholic sentiment or Catholic poetry, much Historically with mean Catholic priesthood.