

CHAPLAIN JOHN IRELAND.

Reminiscences of one of the Heroes of the Rebellion—Slavery on the Battlefield—The Young Priest, Now the Honored Archbishop, Helped Save the Day at Corinth, Fearlessly Distributing Ammunition.

Philadelphia Catholic Times.

Washington, August 9. In the year 1862 Father John Ireland, then a young priest, was appointed chaplain of the Fifth Minnesota Volunteers by Governor Ramsey. The average chaplain of the army in those days was little better than a nonentity. Very seldom were his services called into requisition. The incidents connected with those troubles some times were such as to place him almost *hors du combat* in the minds of the soldiers, who were always on the move or engaged in the noble and manly art of killing.

Occasionally a straggler on the road or resting after marching day and night would have wished for his blessing and his services, but generally there was very little attention paid to the spiritual comfort of the soldier. After the fatigue and exhaustion of the marching and fighting the wearied soldier, officer and chaplain were glad to look into their haversacks and their canteens to find something in the shape of hardtack and muddy water to refresh the inner man and to take that rest that tired nature required. I do not mean to infer that there was wanting a desire on the part of soldiers or chaplains to engage in those exercises of devotion. On the contrary, whenever an opportunity was afforded it was utilized and the good and popular chaplain, Ireland, could always be found in the midst of battles, skirmishes, marches and retreats, relieving not only the spiritual but the temporal needs of his soldiers.

A POPULAR CHAPLAIN. Father Ireland was one of the most popular officers in the regiment. He was always ready to drop a kind, encouraging word to this soldier, a smile and a nod of recognition to another, words of cheer to every one. He was of cheerful, happy disposition himself, and like the sun, he cast his rays of sunshine all around and won the hearts of all, officers and soldiers alike. It was cheering to the sad and homesick youth to see this good Father gather around him the soldiers and seek to divert their thoughts from the thousand and one trials and hardships they had to encounter through their love for fatherland.

The Rev. Father was a good chess-player, too, and always carried with him his little set of chessmen and board, and after camping for the night, first taking his supper of bacon and cracker, washed down by water or coffee, he was ready to give battle with his chessmen on his rubber blanket board to any of the men, no matter how rough or polished, ragged or otherwise.

After the siege of Corinth the Fifth Minnesota went into camp on the banks of a little river called Clear Creek. It certainly was not called by that name because of the clearness of the water, for it was the muddiest of streams. The soldiers were delighted, as they expected to remain in camp for some time, but their expectations were soon nipped in the bud by the stirring incidents of the war.

A MEMORABLE SUNDAY. The troops passed one Sunday there, and the day was made memorable, for it was on this day that Father Ireland gave the regiment his first sermon. The boys vied with each other in their efforts to construct a little rude altar, and soon made a shelter for him from the burning heat of the sun by way of a canopy of branches of tree and green sapplings. I have never heard of a similar occurrence during the war. Very soon the voice of the Father drew around him a large audience. Soldiers under trees, loitering and playing cards and amusing themselves as soldiers usually do, were seen approaching from all directions, and there, under the burning rays of a Mississippi sun, they listened to the eloquent and soul-stirring words of the young chaplain. The Father handled his theme in a masterly manner, talked to the hearts of the boys, as he well knew how to do, and after he had finished he received such a cheer as would make the welkin ring. The veterans cheered and cheered as he came down from his brush pulpit.

On Monday morning all were again ready for the march. "Boots and saddles" sounded and the army moved on to begin anew the sanguinary strife. The 4th of October, 1862, will never be forgotten by the Fifth Minnesota Volunteers, for on that day one of the most desperate and bloody battles of the far West was fought between the Union and Confederate forces—the Union under the gallant Rosecrans and the Confederate under Prince and Van Dorn—at Corinth, Miss. Thousands of brave men on both sides were killed in this battle, which is now memorable for the charge of the famous Texas Brigade, under Rodgers, on the Union position. The charge was that of the bravest of the brave of the forces of the Confederacy, and Rodgers and hundreds of his men were left lying on the field.

The Union position was protected by Battery Robinson, and after the smoke had cleared away the Confederates were seen re-attacking their original position. It was in this ever memorable battle that Father Ireland covered himself with glory. The chaplain was on the right of the Union position in the afternoon and his modesty was such that he was unconscious of the victory that through his agency he was achieving.

INTO THE MOUTH OF DEATH General Hubbard, commander of the

Fifth Minnesota, made the following report in connection with the circumstances to which I refer: "The determined assault of Van Dorn's army has been gallantly met and firmly withstood, except upon the right. There the rebels had succeeded in penetrating our lines and captured some of our batteries and were pouring into the streets of Corinth. The situation was critical. Unless the enemy was turned back and that gap closed it would admit a column of Van Dorn's army to the town and Rosecrans' lines would be taken in the rear, the consequences of which would not be otherwise than calamitous. The Fifth Minnesota Regiment closed the gap. It was like a whirlwind against the flank of that penetrating force. The enemy recoiled under the shock. The pent-up energies of the Fifth Regiment were released and it did the work of a brigade of men. Stunned by the terrible execution of the volleys poured into it the confused mass of the enemy halted and fell back, closely pressed by the Fifth Regiment. It took the batteries that had been lost and reestablished the line at the point where it had been broken."

BRAVE FATHER IRELAND.

To enable the reader to understand the circumstances under which the enemy succeeded in penetrating the Union lines, it must be borne in mind that when the battle on the Union right raged the hottest, the cry for ammunition was yelled along the Union line, but the ammunition was exhausted and the soldiers were hunting for it among the cartridge-boxes of the dead and wounded. When the soldiers were giving way, when lo! in the distance a man was seen hurrying forward with a barrel of cartridges on his shoulder, yelling at the top of his voice: "Here, boys: here are the cartridges!" A cheer went up from the soldiers, which resounded all along the Union line. This man rushed along the line, distributing the cartridges. Throughout the whole time the leaden hail thinned the ranks with death and destruction all around. This brave man, the bravest of the brave, repeated his visits with the barrel of cartridges on his shoulder until he had provided the full forty rounds or until every soldier was supplied. Who was this wonderful non-combatant? None other than the chaplain of the Fifth Minnesota Regiment, the heroic Father Ireland! It is doubtful whether a similar instance of bravery is recorded of either army during the whole of the late war.

The Fifth Regiment turned on the advancing column and the result was as stated in General Hubbard's report above quoted. When the battle was over search was made for the chaplain, but he was not to be found. Then it was that the soldier boys began to speak of the heroism of the good chaplain, and especially the last never-to-be-forgotten heroic deed. All became alarmed, at his absence. The search was renewed and to the great joy of all he was found superintending a hospital hurriedly constructed for the wounded. There, succoring the distressed and wounded and ministering like an angel of gladness to the dying, was this brave priest found. The whole regiment gave one great cheer at the announcement that he was safe.

Years have passed since that historic battle, but its memory will remain green as long as a veteran of the Fifth Minnesota Regiment survives. Father John Ireland is now the great Archbishop Ireland, one of the most prominent prelates in Christendom. His name has been heard the world over. He has captivated the hearts of all who ever met him in Europe or in America. He is the pride of his people and the glory of his country, the highest representative of American genius and American institutions.

J. C. O'CONNELL, M. D.

Mr. Adams' Letter.

The *Churchman* publishes several communications from correspondents criticizing Rev. Mr. Adams' published reasons for leaving the Protestant Episcopal Church. As a rule they treat him with respect and do not question the integrity of his motives. One writes: "It is scarcely necessary to say that the loss of so gifted a young man is a real loss to the Church."

They all, however, condemn the bitterness of tone that characterizes his letter, and in this we do not say they are wrong. Converts to the Catholic Church are not encouraged to attack their former associates, and if Rev. Mr. Adams did this in a spirit not to be commended, we are inclined to attribute it to that feeling of irritation arising from a long contest with his conscience and an utter failure to reconcile his principles with his worldly interests.

It is hard to be driven by one's conscience to break with old associations and turn to a future that, in a purely worldly point of view, is by no means cheering. — *Philadelphia Catholic Times*.

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ST. JANE FRANCES DE CHANTAL.

AUG. 21.

For the CATHOLIC RECORD.

St. Jane de Chantal was the daughter of Benignus Fremiot, one of the presidents of the Burgundian Parliament during the reign of Henri Quatre. He was left a widower while his children were yet very young, but being a very pious man, in spite of his numerous affairs of State he attended well to the religious and secular training of his little family.

When our saint was only twenty years of age she was married to the Baron de Chantal, an officer of great distinction in the French army.

As mistress of a household she was a model well worthy of imitation. Her husband was out twenty-seven years of age; and his absences having been frequent, his servants had fallen into great irregularities. This his wife set about reforming with the utmost gentleness and sweetness.

Her first care was to see that all her servants, male and female, said their morning and evening prayers, the latter of which were said together with their pious mistress. She obliged them all to hear Mass on Sundays and holidays at the parish church and on weekdays in her own private chapel.

The meals were partaken of at regular hours and the various household duties discharged in order. By her gentle and kind manner, her sympathy in their pains and afflictions and her interest in all their affairs, she completely won the hearts of all those in her employ, and her household became a most perfectly ordered one.

The Baroness de Chantal spent much time in her private devotions; and in the first years of her married life she abridged these works of piety during the time which her husband spent at home. At these seasons her house was filled with gay company, but in the year 1601 she resolved never to curtail her pious practices under any pretext. She managed so as to make herself a model of courtesy, affability and gaiety towards her guests, and at the same time to acquit herself perfectly of her duties towards God.

The Baron de Chantal was a man of honor, dignity and refinement and at the same time possessed of a spirit of ardent piety. The holy couple were blessed with a noble boy and three charming daughters, and nothing seemed wanting to complete their happiness. But a heavy cross was about to fall upon the gentle Baroness.

One day the Baron, with a party of friends, went on shooting. During the sport he was accidentally shot by one of his guests, who, seeing his brown shooting jacket through the bushes, took it for a deer. For nine days he lingered in great agony. He pardoned the friend who had injured him, causing the pardon to be recorded in the church register that no one might prosecute him. He received the last sacraments with great devotion, and expired in the arms of his grief-stricken wife. Left a widow at the early age of twenty-eight the grief of our saint was inexpressible. Yet no murmur escaped her lips, and she showed in all her sorrow perfect resignation to the holy will of God. To show her entire forgiveness to the gentleman who had been the innocent cause of her husband's death, she strove to show him every kindness in her power and became godmother for one of his children.

After the year of her mourning had expired her father, Mr. Fremiot, sent for her to come and live with him, and a year later she was obliged to take her children to the home of her father in law. Here she had much to suffer from a bad-tempered old housekeeper. But her patience was unalterable and her piety most consistent. The servants ever said of her: "Madame prays always, yet is never troublesome to anybody."

She got up every morning at five without a fire. She made an hour's meditation, then called her children and took them with her to Mass. She performed many other spiritual exercises during the day and always said the Rosary aloud with her little family. She mortified her taste as far as possible without being perceived; wore hair-cloth next her body, coarse linen and very plain clothes; she visited the poor and sick in the neighborhood and took care of the most loathsome creatures in the hospitals.

As soon as her children were old enough to do without a mother's care she resolved to leave the world, and, at the request of St. Francis de Sales, her director, became the foundress and first Mother of her new Congregation of the Visitation. Here she was distinguished especially by her humility and charity, and was a model of every virtue to her spiritual daughters.

In 1641 she died the death of the saints.

Here favorite virtues were humility, meekness and charity.

"With whom," said she, "did Jesus Christ converse? With a traitor, who sold Him at a cheap rate; with a thief, who reviled Him in His last moments; with sinners and proud Pharisees. Ah! shall we, at every shadow of an affront or contradiction, show how little charity and patience we have?"

A sin which the saint could not condemn strongly enough was that of talking of the faults of one's neighbors, especially when there was the least shadow of envy or spite. She thought slanderous persons deserved to lose their tongues, and would have been willing to suffer the loss of her own to prevent this vice among those of whom she had charge.

A SAN JOSE.

THE CONFESSIONAL.

A Chief Justice's Ruling That Will Never be Obedied.

London, August 1.—Priestly circles are considerably agitated over a ruling just made by Sir Frederick Jeune, Chief Justice of the Court of Probate and Divorce, to the effect that a minister of the gospel has no right to plead privilege when asked to state in court the substance of a confidential communication made to him in his sacred capacity by one of his parishioners.

Hitherto it has been the unwritten law of England, as well as of many other countries, that a divine shall not be compelled to disclose such communications, and in cases which occur almost weekly Roman Catholic priests are excused from disclosing statements made to them under the sanctity of the confessional. In the case in court the divine belonged to the High Church branch of the Episcopal denomination, and was in the habit of hearing confessions. The Court, however, compelled him to disclose the information that had been made to him.

Several Catholic priests, who have been interviewed concerning the decision, declare that they would go to prison for contempt of court rather than reveal the secrets of the confessional on the witness stand.

Mass in a Country Church.

Catholics whose rule of life it is to attend to their duties, are not apt to fall away in summer more than at any other seasons. If situated while out of the city, reasonably near a church, they contrive to go to Mass on Sunday. In the country, a church can generally be reached—usually a pretty and picturesque building, to which it is a pleasure to go. In the tranquil shadow of great trees it often stands, a little apart from the roadside—not a very imposing building, perhaps, but of simple and pleasing architecture.

Pleasant it is to hear Mass at one of these country churches on a Sunday in summer. The ringing of the church-bell, the sound speeding softly through the bright morning sunshine—is there anything sweeter? And now the little congregation begins to arrive, the well-to-do in their handsome carriage, other in plainer vehicles, some of them quaint and homely enough, and still others—the majority—on foot.

There is always one sign of a Catholic congregation—an unfailing sign, the cross over the building—the great cross over the poor and those in an humble condition. All go in together, and in the pews are ranged side by side, and the Mass begins.

Commonly in the country it is a low Mass because it is not easy to make up a choir but nearly always there is an organ, and the service proceeds a few hymns are sung. The priest rarely delivers a regular sermon, usually it is an instruction—upon some theme pertinent to the gospel of the day—and in a little while the celebration is over. From it every one goes away refreshed and edified.

Appeal From Pulpit For Salary.

Rev. F. A. Smith, of Silver Mine, Conn., has caused a sensation in the town. After preaching a good sermon and giving out the regular church notices last Sunday, Rev. Mr. Smith started his hearers by saying:

"I come to you this morning with an empty stomach. I have not had a mouthful to eat to-day because I could not get it. For over a week I and my family have lived entirely on blackberries and bread. The reason my family is not here this morning is because they have no shoes to wear. I do not ask charity, but only that you pay me the salary you agreed to, that I may not starve."

Deacon Lane objected to such pulpit utterances, and a quarrel ensued. Mr. Smith was asked about his fine horse and chickens, but he got even by asking how much bread of life they expected a man to get for his family on a salary of \$300 per year, and especially when it was overdue and unpaid.

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