

TEST OF NATIONAL PROSPERITY.

BY AN OCCASIONAL CONTRIBUTOR.

On all grand questions of national, social, of political importance, the opinions of men who occupy the leading positions in each sphere are of great value. Not that they are infallible, or even humanly perfect, but because the men holding such opinions are examples, living and acting, illustrative of their theories. In a recent number of the New York "Evening Post," M. Loubet, President of the French Republic, publishes an article on the subject of "Young Men and the Republic." Axioms are very useful, especially when pointed and clear. Mr. Loubet is axiomatic, but it requires considerable reflection on the part of an ordinary reader before seizing the exact purport of his axioms. We say this supposing that his translator has not misinterpreted him, for it was only a translation that we read.

The President lays down this general principle: "Just as much as man genius stands above blind matter, does man's genius lie beneath justice and charity." Now we don't quite see the object of this peculiar statement, nor do we really understand it. We know that he means to tell us that justice and charity are as superior to man's genius as that genius is superior to blind matter. If he had said man's soul is as inferior to justice and charity, or love, (which are attributes of God) as it is superior to matter, there might be some sense in it or it might, at least, have some application to the subject in hand. But the soul and God are not to be mentioned, much less calculated upon, when the President—a very good man, individually—addresses the public, is not a Waldeck-Rousseau Premier, and does not an infidel council advise the President? No matter, all we have to say is that we are too dense to understand this brightly of a great man.

Our object is not to make review of President Loubet's article—that would necessitate an essay on half a score of subjects—but we wish to point out the fact, that even the head of a free, democratic country, of a liberty-inspired republic, of a "liberty, fraternity and equality" Government, is not free to write as he feels in every case. We have reason to know that were M. Loubet a private citizen and were he to dot down his personal convictions, he would indicate a very different article upon such an important subject. He rightly tells how the test of the prosperity of a nation is the opportunity it offers young men of taking part in public affairs. He proceeds to tell of all the immense advantages enjoyed by the youth of France to-day.

We have no intention of disputing the existence of all those advantages; but we note in the whole essay the careful avoidance of one word about religion, or its influence. Take this paragraph, for example: "I should notice also, as influencing the youth of to-day, the more practical methods of instruction. The studies in literature, philosophy, jurisprudence, which formerly dwelt rather apart in an ideal sphere, have been brought down to earth and the daily problems of life. Chairs have been created, schools have been opened for the study of moral and political science, labor legislation and finance, the professors of literature have ceased to occupy themselves solely with the glories of the past and have turned to the accomplishments and hopes of the present."

MEN I HAVE SEEN AND HEARD.

BY A VETERAN SCRIBBLER.

Not many years ago it was my privilege to be present in St. Patrick's Church, Montreal, when a sermon was delivered by the late Bishop O'Farrell, of Trenton, N. J. Consequently I can truthfully say that he was one of the remarkable men whom I have seen and heard. But, beyond that one occasion, and the very slight idea such a brief moment could afford me of that eminent churchman, I cannot claim immediate acquaintance with the subject of this week's sketch. Besides, when I heard the renowned pulpit orator, it was not on one of those occasions which are calculated to bring out all the powers of the man; it was more a touching, sympathetic conversation with old friends, full of fond associations and tender reminiscences, that I chanced to hear. For the readers know, possibly better than I do, that the late bishop had for years directed the spiritual interests in St. Ann's parish and in this city had delivered many of the sermons that called him a continental apostle. But from what I saw of him and what I heard of him from his closest friends, I can well

convince his hearers; and to this end, for God's glory, he was glad to make use of all the faculties, advantages, and gifts with which heaven had endowed him.

Consequently, as far as my personal experience of the late lamented bishop is concerned, I will not require to draw upon it to any considerable extent. But, basing myself upon the occasion to which I refer, it is not difficult for me to go back over the years, and summon up a picture—very inadequately portrayed perhaps—of Father O'Farrell, in the hey-day of his power and influence. To do so I will be contented with the recording of one remarkable event in his career—an event not yet forgotten by the men of that day, and around which cluster a score of associations—historical, religious, national, and even literary. In order to bring more clearly before the reader's mind the scene that I will attempt to describe—a scene unique in the history of St. Patrick's parish, and in the annals of Canadian pulpits—I shall have to leave the immediate path before me and step for a moment into the by-ways of the past.

It was the morning of the 8th April, 1868; I was a lad, at the time, and in the company of my mother was driving over the old roads in the history of St. Patrick's parish, and in the annals of Canadian pulpits—I shall have to leave the immediate path before me and step for a moment into the by-ways of the past.

More chairs of "moral science" in the universities is about the nearest he dare come to the really important side of education.

We will quote one more paragraph: "There is one very notable characteristic of the generation which is just entering upon its majority, namely, as having a grave social mission to accomplish. They do not take life lightly. The new education, well reasoned and scientific, has brought them face to face with those problems which were not formerly the concerns of youth. They examine the social structure. They study their fellow-men. They strive for the best. The young men of our colleges seem to be impressed with the thought that is at once a responsibility and a trust and not a mere acquisition of lore and culture. They make their own acquisitions the measure of their duty to others. Thus in all our great cities and in many country places they have founded philanthropic and polytechnic associations, through which they instruct those who have not had the happy fortune of securing the higher education of the colleges. This plan of university extension was devised and is carried on by the young men—the students. And this is only one of the ways in which they strive to fulfill what seems to them a social mission. With equal seriousness they look upon the duty and privilege of citizenship. Never have young men faced an epoch so rich in opportunity, and so big with responsibility. We who are of an older generation can but congratulate them upon the fact that their education has in large measure prepared them to use wisely their opportunities and assume, with good hope, and courage, the burden of their responsibilities."

Here we have a lot of generalities, of very acceptable platitudes, but nothing original. We have been trained from youth with a grand ideal of social success, of political achievement before them. But not one step beyond does the system go. He truly hints that the older generation is making way for the rising one. Where is the older one going? Into nonentity for aught he tells us. Where will the younger one end when it, in turn, becomes hoary with years? At best under a monument, as far as the physical part is concerned, and in some kind of academic immortality as far as regards the genius. But what of that mortal training? To what purpose? There is no God, no Eternity, no after life, no soul, no faith, no religion. It is all hollow, vain, vague, useless and unstable. Yet it is the President of a great Republic that writes, and his government will applaud his wisdom.

One month from the day upon which this poem appeared, the remains of McGee were carried, amidst throngs innumerable, along the same street, into the same temple, up the same aisle, to be placed on the same catafalque, amidst the same surroundings, in presence of the same altar, whereon was to be sung the same unchangeable Requiem Mass, the same words that St. Patrick's was crowded that day of death, hapless never there. There was an undercurrent of emotion that circulated in every direction, and seemed to seek vent in some means or other. The hearts of the faithful congregation were full of overflowing. It required but the vibrating hand of oratorical expression to shake the drops over the bier and down the street, which hallowed intensity from the astounding circumstances to which that gathering was due. And, to quote that last poem, "Right solemnly the Mass was said, While burned the tapers 'round the dead, And many tears like rain were shed."

Such the occasion, such the scene, when Father O'Farrell ascended the pulpit to pronounce the funeral oration of McGee. As the humble Irishman, at the bridge, had drawn his McGee's earlier poems, so the great sacred orator drew his inspiration from the last poem that the hand, then cold in death—had traced. He went back one month to the day on which McGee knelt by that catafalque, and conceived his immortal and immortalizing verses; the parallel of two such occasions was so striking, that it seemed to possess the mind of the preacher. In language which only such as he are capable of, he unfolded the true story of McGee's life, trace his course from cradle to bier, and summon up the picture of those few last weeks, last days, and last hours on earth. There was a silence, deep and oppressive, as that which precedes a hurricane; a silence that, without figure of speech, I might say could be felt in all parts of the sacred edifice. And the speaker, raised up, phrase upon phrase, sentence upon sentence,

the storm of sentiment gathered strength and velocity, until, at a given moment, the pent-up feelings could no longer be restrained within bounds, and a low and long murmuring of applause ran down the central aisle, swelled upwards towards the galleries, and swept around the pulpit. The quick ear of Father O'Farrell detected the sound, and at once it was checked, pausing, changing tone, leaning over the pulpit, with warning hands raised, "Remember, Brethren, we are in the House of God," he cried out. "Remember we are in presence of the Blessed Sacrament—we are in presence of the dead!"

The sound died away, like the distant rumbling of summer's thunder when it blends with echo and is lost in the silence of space. The sermon was continued without further interruption; but the great orator who spoke had to perform the still more difficult task of completing his oration while restraining his own feelings, and keeping the natural flow of his very gesture and intonation. Had McGee—himself one of the brightest orators that ever crossed the Atlantic—been alive on that occasion, what a subject would not have had for a poem! That funeral oration, for the third of a century linked the name of one great orator with the memories of the other and when Father McGee's funeral was mentioned Father O'Farrell's sermon was recalled.

Thirty years passed over the world; on the storm-swept side of Mount Royal the statesman, orator, patriot and poet slept undisturbed; the priest of St. Patrick's drifted away at the summons of duty from the scenes of his achievements, and from the ranks of the priesthood he ascended the episcopal throne. Thirty years swept past, and the day came when in God's designs the earthly career of Tremblay's bishop was to close. In turn his lips became silent for all time, his presence in the sacred pulpit was never again to be seen, his life-work remained to be recorded by the pen of admirers and children of the Church, while the stillness of the tomb claimed his familiar form. Thirty years—and the chief figures of that memorable occasion—the passive one in the coffin and the living one in the pulpit—were united in the union of grave; and we pray, with the spirit of our faith, equally in the promised "union hereafter."

OUR CURBSTONE OBSERVER.

On School Advertisements.

Last week a lady asked my advice concerning the selection of a school for her boy; he had attended a private preparatory academy for a couple of years, but she now wants to place him in a higher school. Not feeling competent, for obvious reasons, to give advice in the matter, I simply told her to look over the advertising columns of the "True Witness," and under the heading "Educational" she would likely find a pretty complete list of the available institutions. I had been reading the Liverpool "Catholic Times," a very fair sample of the Catholic press in England, and I had noticed, among the advertisements, a mention of the summer vacation, that every Catholic establishment—college, seminary, convent, academy, or school—was duly recorded on its pages. I had also remarked the same thing in the case of a few American Catholic papers, such as the "Standard and Times," of Philadelphia. I naturally concluded that it would be the same with the "True Witness," so I gave my advice a little off-hand.

I can imagine the surprise of that lady, if she has taken my advice, on opening this paper; at least, it must have been equal to my own. That evening I wished to look over my own contribution of the previous week, so I took up the paper. I remembered my lady friend and the advice I had given her; so I glanced at the list of advertised Catholic institutions, intending to guess, in my own mind, whether or not she would find it an exceedingly easy matter to make a choice—so few were the institutions mentioned in those columns.

While I regretted having spoken as I did to the lady in question (she might imagine that I had been making fun of her) still I was pleased that the circumstance led me to discover for myself the existence of a very painful and not very encouraging fact. I have not yet taken the trouble to do so; but I am convinced that were I to examine the secular press I would find a number of our prominent institutions advertised in its columns. However, this discovery led to some reflection. I became curious on the subject. I began measuring up the space occupied by our institutions in the paper, and I found out, to my still greater surprise, that the bulk of that space was occupied by Protestant firms. Decidedly I had ample subject matter for meditation that evening.

As the readers of the "True Witness," for a couple of years back, are aware I am given to be out-and-out under any guiding or "measuring" I do not think I need say more. I learned at school, that two and two make four; and that if I take two from four two will remain. It is certainly not with any idea of doing an act of charity, nor of aiding the Catholic cause, nor of assisting in the apostolate of the press, that these leading and wealthy Protestants select the "True Witness" as a medium for the advertising of their business. They do not do so for the mere pleasure of seeing their firm in print. They must have had, from a business point of view, that it pays them to thus patronize the Catholic press. If, then, the circulation of a

The Coming Struggle!



CORNWALL SHAMROCK.
S.A.A.A. Grounds,
SATURDAY, 17th August, 1901

Ball faced at 3 P.M. 1 1/2 Hours' Play, Rain or shine.
Admission 25c and 35c; Grand Stand, 50c; Reserved Seats 75c. Tickets for sale by John T. Lyons, corner of Craig and Bleury; A. Decary, corner St. Catherine and St. Denis; Pearson & Co. Chocolatiers; John Tucker, McCord Street.
T. F. SLATTERY, Hon. Sec.

friends and fighting the enemy, have in public meeting at Cologne denounced the anti-Catholic spirit in which the "Kölnische Zeitung," a bitter opponent of the Church, is conducted, and the subject of repelling the attacks of the anti-Catholic press will occupy the attention of the forty-eighth General Congress of German Catholics which will be held at Osnabrück from the 25th to the 29th of this month. These German Catholics have a knowledge of the requirements of successful public action.

CATHOLIC FEDERATION.—After due deliberation over the many details necessary to perfect the scheme, the committee charged with the programme for a general meeting, to further the national federation of Catholic Societies in the United States, says the "Irish American," have decided to hold a convention for the purpose of considering plans and framing a constitution, at the Lyceum Building, Long Branch, on Wednesday evening, Aug. 28. Bishop McPaul and other prominent clergymen and laymen interested in the success of the movement will be present. All Catholic societies are invited to send at least two delegates. It is expected confidently that some practical plan will be evolved by the combined wisdom at this gathering.

DEATH OF MGR. CLAPPERTON.—The death took place at Fochabers last week of the Right Rev. Monsignor James Clapperton in his eighty-ninth year, after a long and laborious priesthood of sixty-five years' service, most unselfishly devoted to the highest interests of the Catholic Church in Scotland. Ordained in 1836, Monsignor Clapperton first of all acted as a professor for five years at Valladolid. His first appointment to mission work was at St. Mary's, Edinburgh, in 1841, afterwards at Portobello, and then resident priest at Peebles, where he labored for forty years. Prior to his demise Monsignor Clapperton was for some years stationed at Fochabers. During his lifetime the Monsignor showed himself a most generous benefactor of St. Mary's College, Blair.

LOYAL TO CHURCH.—We quoted last week a very timely paragraph, from the "Sacred Heart Review" upon modern skepticism; a very appropriate conclusion to the remarks of our contemporary on that subject is the following note regarding the loyalty due to the Church. We reproduce it for the purpose of giving wider circulation to an idea and to a sentiment, both of which harmonize exactly with what we have always sought to indicate. The paragraph reads:—

"Luckily for the Church, the number of these callow, and indeed shallow, skeptics is few. Their skepticism is in most cases simply a phase. It passes away as they grow older and acquire more mature ideas of what life here and hereafter means. Being based on ignorance, when this ignorance is removed by a more extended reading of Catholic authorities, or by a more intimate acquaintance with Catholics of sense and character, the unbeliever disappears, and they generally regret for the rest of their lives that they could have been so utterly foolish as to set, even for an instant, their puny intellects against the Church of Christ. Our advice to all such is to be loyal to the Church. Instead of wasting time seeking for objections against her, be continually on the watch for arguments to strengthen your faith and to meet the attacks of her enemies. Accept wholeheartedly the Church as the mother of your souls. Be faithful in your religious duties. Cense impudent prying into mysteries, and above all, don't go around annoying sensible people with silly arguments which are simply echoes of the false and un-Catholic principles which have a knack of finding their way into the editorial utterances of the yellow journals from day to day."

We think, without much danger of being mistaken, that silly arguments of the class above mentioned find their way into the editorial columns of other journals that are neither yellow nor sensational. It is a pity to find even in reputed Catholic publications many of these "prying" articles, the fault-finding paragraphs, the petty censuring contributions. Yes, there is very much to be pondered upon in the advice to be loyal to the Church.

Time breathes his mist on the vast ocean of ages, and rolls along the surface, the dark, impenetrable fog of forgetfulness.