

The Catholic Record.

"CHRISTIANUS SINE NOMINE EST, CATHOLICUS VERO OGNOMEN."—"CHRISTIAN IS MY NAME, BUT CATHOLIC BY SURNAMING."—St. Pacian, 4th Century.

LONDON, ONTARIO, SATURDAY, FEB. 25, 1888.

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Written for the CATHOLIC RECORD
BY OCELLIDE.

In our last *colli* I spoke of the Bishops who presided over the districts of Montreal, the Red River, Upper Canada, and Prince Edward Island, with New Brunswick and the Magdalen Islands, as auxiliaries of the Bishop of Quebec. Perhaps a clearer account of the state of the church in the British North American colonies in the early part of the present century may be of interest to some readers of the RECORD.

From the first establishment of Christianity in the districts already named they had been within the ecclesiastical limits of the diocese of Quebec. When in 1806 Monsignor Joseph Octave Plessis ascended the episcopal throne, he found himself charged with an immense jurisdiction, extending from the southern boundary of the Canadas to the wild coasts of Labrador and the prairies of the great North West. Mgr. Plessis was a great man and a wise bishop, ranking second only to the grand old founder of the See of Quebec, Laval de Montmorenci. But proportionate to his talents were the difficulties with which he had to contend, difficulties which in these days of peace and toleration we should almost forget, were it not that the *Mail*, with its tendency to "progress backwards," keeps constantly, and perhaps unconsciously, reminding us of the narrow minded bigotry which in the first years of the present century characterized the Government of Canada. Monsignor Plessis found that it would be utterly impossible for him to travel over the immense extent of country included in his diocese. He saw also that his French Canadian children were pushing their way westward and northward, further and further still, so that not even his prophetic mind could grasp the extent of country which they were destined to populate. In Upper Canada, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island there were numerous new colonies of Scotch Catholics who spoke a language utterly unknown to the Quebec Seminary. From these families came boys soliciting an education and training for the priesthood, while in Quebec, Montreal and Kingston, bands of Irish emigrants were yearly arriving. Bishop Plessis framed his designs, but to carry them out he had first to convince Rome and then to conciliate England. In Quebec a strong party, headed on the one side by Mr. Ryland, with the warm and open support of the governor, Sir James Craig, were endeavoring to debar Mgr. Plessis from using his title, which they declared belonged only to Dr. Mountain, the Anglican Bishop of Quebec. A title mark, which had been borne by the *Catholic Bishops of Quebec* for more than one hundred and fifty years. In these pretensions, however, they were not upheld by the English Government. In 1815 Lord Bathurst, in writing to General Prevost, (who had succeeded General Craig as Governor)

"I do not know precisely how far these auxiliary bishops were subject to the diocese of Quebec, but a letter from the Secretary of State, in 1819, to Mgr. Plessis says:

"As you express clearly that the persons to be nominated will depend upon you, in your quality of Roman Catholic Bishop of Quebec, His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, full of confidence in your honour, your zeal, and your loyalty toward His Majesty's government, has been pleased to consent to the arrangement proposed, and to permit M. L'Artigue to fix himself in Montreal and M. Provencher to remain in the Hudson's Bay Territory, in order that they may exercise respectively an ecclesiastical authority subordinate to your own, and give you the required assistance in those parts of His Majesty's domains professing the religion of the Church of Rome."

In the correspondence of Mgr. Plessis with Bishop MacEachern, it appears that the Bishop of Quebec alone in Canada had the power of conferring faculties upon priests until the year 1825. On the 13th of March, of that year, he writes to Bishop MacEachern:

"MONSIEUR—The indulgence of which the above is a copy, is a response to the desire which you expressed to the Propaganda, to be able to transmit to others the extraordinary faculties which I hold from the Holy See, and which I have already had the honor of communicating to you. Use them in such fulness as it may please you for all future missionaries; those who are now stationed in New Brunswick, Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island are already sufficiently endowed."

The above explains a fact which has greatly puzzled a searcher into the antiquarian lore of the diocese of Antigonish—namely, that an old manuscript addressed to Rev. Alexander Macdonell of Judique, Cape Breton, giving him faculties and parochial jurisdiction over the Island of Cape Breton, including as many of the Catholics of Nova Scotia as he might happen to meet, is signed, "J. O. Bishop of Quebec, 17th October, 1824."

It appears that up to the date of Mgr. Plessis' death Bishop MacEachern was in the habit of applying to him for information, counsel and definitions, for I

have a letter dated 13th July, 1825, which is almost in all respects such as might be written from a bishop to his Vicar general.

As to Nova Scotia proper, it was exceptionally situated with regard to matters spiritual, as Bishop Plessis, writing in September, 1822, to Bishop MacEachern, says:

"You will communicate to Mr. Fraser not verbally, but in writing the same powers as I gave you in 1812 except as regards Nova Scotia, in which (providence) you know that neither you nor I have jurisdiction."

Not until 1844 was the dormant dignity of Archbishop of Quebec revived. In that year Mgr. Joseph Signy, who had been consecrated in 1833 took the title and established the Archiepiscopal See.

The Bishop of Resina in 1820 dropped his title *in partibus* and became Bishop of Kingston. The same year the Bishop of Rosen took the title of Bishop of Charlottetown.

The Bishop of Tennesse, after 1836, was recognized as Bishop of Montreal. The first Bishop of New Brunswick was consecrated in 1842. In 1845 the Rev. Dr. Walsh was consecrated Bishop of Halifax, and Dr. Fraser, to whom had been accorded the title of Bishop of Halifax the year previous, was transferred to the newly erected diocese of Arichat. In 1847 Mgr. Provencher exchanged his title *in partibus* of Bishop of Juliopolis, for that of Bishop of St. Boniface. A. M. P.

Written for the Catholic Record.
HOW A SCHOOLMASTER BECAME A CATHOLIC.

LETTER III.

While investigating sections of history, for the purpose of learning something about persecution, I came across several scraps that have a bearing on the church; charge, often made against the church; namely, that she has always been her steady care and sensible interest to check any aspiration of her people towards intellectual culture. The mildest form of the statement generally made is that, if she has not actually exerted her authority to keep *superstition* comfortably ignorant, she has studiously refrained from encouraging any effort put forth for the diffusion of knowledge. This opinion, it is safe to say, is firmly rooted in the Protestant mind. What ordinary intellect is not certain of it? But how extraordinary it is that people possibly intelligent can entertain such a contradiction of all respectable history. Of course I was once full of it; but after reading with both eyes open, for a time, I was forced to dissent from the popular view of the matter.

"In the western world the pursuit of knowledge was now carried on with incredible emulation and ardor, and all the various branches of science were vigorously cultivated and advanced. This literary enthusiasm was encouraged by the influence of certain of the European monarchs, and Roman pontiffs, who received the happy tendency of the sciences to soften the savage manners of uncivilized nations, and thereby to administer an additional support to civilization, as well as an ornament to human society. Hence, learned societies were formed, and in which the liberal arts and sciences were publicly taught" (Moshelm, E. H. Century XI., pp. 25-29)

"The sciences carried a fairer aspect in the western world, where every branch of erudition was cultivated with assiduity and zeal, and of consequence, flourished with increasing vigor, from day to day. The industrious and enterprising youth applied themselves to canon law, which was their path to preferment, or employed their labors in philosophical researches, in order to the attainment of a shining reputation, and of the applause that was lavished upon such as were endowed with a subtle and metaphysical genius. Hence the bitter complaints that were made by the pontiff and other bishops, of the neglect and decline of the liberal arts and sciences; and hence also the zealous, but unsuccessful efforts they used to turn the youth from jurisprudence and philosophy, to the study of humanity and philology." (Moshelm, E. H. Century XII., p. 164)

"In all the Latin provinces, schemes were laid and carried into execution with considerable success, for promoting the study of letters, improving taste, and dispelling the pedantic spirit of the times. The laudable disposition gave rise to the erection of many schools and academies, at Cologne, Orleans, Cahors, Perugia, Florence, and Pisa, in which the liberal arts and sciences, distributed into the same classes that still subsist in those places, were taught with assiduity and zeal. Opulent persons of the higher and especially episcopal rank, in which, besides the public universities, in which the bitter monks, young men of narrow circumstances, were educated in all the branches of literature." (Moshelm, E. H. Century XIV., p. 305)

Commenting on the period subsequent to Gregory VII., the Catholic historian Azog, says: "In the cloister—schools and cathedral schools, excellent masters were provided to impart gratuitous education to all comers, and forbidden to receive any compensation for their labors. So rapid was the advance of the intellect, and so great the demand for mental training, that schools of inferior note were soon trans-

formed into universities, without, however, at once embracing in their scope the full curriculum of scientific studies. Some taught more, some fewer branches, and each had its speciality. At Salerno, it was medicine; at Bologna, jurisprudence; and at Paris, canon law, dialectics, and theology" (E. H. Vol. II., p. 729). In a foot note, on the same page he adds: "In addition to these three universities, we have to count the following, which sprang up, one after another: 1. In Italy—Vercena, 1204; Padua, 1222; Naples 1224; Verona, 1228; Pavia, 1246; Treviso, 1260; Ferrara 1264; Perugia, 1276; Rome, 1303; Pisa 1343 and re-established in 1472; Pavia, 1361; Palermo, 1394; Turin, 1405; Catania, 1413; Florence, 1438; Catania 1445. 2. In France, 1300; Cahors, 1332; Arignon, 1340; Angers, 1364; Avignon, 1409; Caen, 1430; Bourdeaux, 1441; Valenciennes, 1452; Nantes, 1463; Bourges, 1465. 3. In Portugal and Spain—Salamanca, 1240; Lisbon, 1290; Valladolid, 1346; Huesca, 1354; Valencia, 1410; Seville, 1471; Saragossa, 1474; Avila 1482; Alcala, 1489; Seville, 1504. 4. In England—Oxford, 1249; Cambridge, 1257. 5. In Scotland—8. Andrews, 1412; Glasgow, 1454; Aberdeen, 1477. 6. In Ireland—1. Drogheda, 1426. In Brabant—Luxemburg—8. In Germany—Vienna, 1365; Hildesberg, 1386; Cologne, 1388; Erfurt, 1392; Logrono, 1401; Wurzburg 1403; Leipsic, 1409; Ratisbon 1419; Guelphstadt, 1456; Frankfurt, 1457; Basle, 1460; Pavia, 1472; Tubingen, 1486; Mainz, 1477; Wittenberg, 1527. 9. In Denmark—10. In Poland—Grodno, 1347; 11. In Denmark—12. In Sweden—Uppsala, 1477; 13. In Hungary—Fenkirchen, 1367; Olona, 1465; Presburg, 1467; 14. In Prussia—Dabau, 1320

All these express testimonies to the prevalence of education in the Middle Ages, and many others that I could transcribe if space permitted, convinced me that during Catholic times there were schools and teachers in abundance; and besides that the best education of the time, and no age can give a better, was the boon of every poor lad that had the spirit to work for it. In these times there were free schools. Free schools in the Middle Ages! Protestants that have investigated the matter frankly admit it. And that very young man, during Catholic times, could get a good education on account given of the foremost men about the time of Luther. Who was Reuchlin the famous Hebrew scholar? The son of very poor parents. Who was Erasmus—a well educated by a monastic order. Who was Martin Luther—the son of an armorer. Who was Luther himself—the son of a common miner. We are told that Luther, who received Catholic education, was a prime Latinist and a fair Greek, when only twelve years old. Compare this with the vulgar report that the great aim of the Catholics has been to keep poor people in ignorance. One thing I know well, that if Luther had been a Cornish miner's son, in the beginning of the 16th century, instead of a German miner's son, the beginning of the 16th century, his name would never be seen in history. Since the "Reformation" few miner's sons, in Cornwall, have seen much of the schoolmaster's face; they know more about washing tin than construing Latin. True enough, a few favored ones sometimes managed to pick up, in sundry ways and divers forms, a little reading, some writing, and a little arithmetic; but the majority have had to be contented with much less. It was lucky for Luther that he was not born in a Protestant country.

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Our old and esteemed friend, Mr. Thomas D. Egan, of the New York Catholic Agency, 42 Barclay street, in, we notice, once more ready to supply the real Palms in any quantity required, to the reverence. Mr. Egan was the first to introduce the real Palms into this country, and in a brief space of time the trade assumed immense proportions. Nearly all the churches have for some time past been using the real Palms. Each Palm Leaf or Head is from three to five feet long, and opens like a fan, with a spread that forms an almost perfect circle. The beautifully mellowed streaks of gold and green, ending in the lightly waving plumes, give them the appearance of rays of sunlight. Plaited or woven into variously devised forms, they make adornments for the altar or for the Catholic Home, that at once attract the eye by their simple beauty.

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formed into universities, without, however, at once embracing in their scope the full curriculum of scientific studies. Some taught more, some fewer branches, and each had its speciality. At Salerno, it was medicine; at Bologna, jurisprudence; and at Paris, canon law, dialectics, and theology" (E. H. Vol. II., p. 729). In a foot note, on the same page he adds: "In addition to these three universities, we have to count the following, which sprang up, one after another: 1. In Italy—Vercena, 1204; Padua, 1222; Naples 1224; Verona, 1228; Pavia, 1246; Treviso, 1260; Ferrara 1264; Perugia, 1276; Rome, 1303; Pisa 1343 and re-established in 1472; Pavia, 1361; Palermo, 1394; Turin, 1405; Catania, 1413; Florence, 1438; Catania 1445. 2. In France, 1300; Cahors, 1332; Arignon, 1340; Angers, 1364; Avignon, 1409; Caen, 1430; Bourdeaux, 1441; Valenciennes, 1452; Nantes, 1463; Bourges, 1465. 3. In Portugal and Spain—Salamanca, 1240; Lisbon, 1290; Valladolid, 1346; Huesca, 1354; Valencia, 1410; Seville, 1471; Saragossa, 1474; Avila 1482; Alcala, 1489; Seville, 1504. 4. In England—Oxford, 1249; Cambridge, 1257. 5. In Scotland—8. Andrews, 1412; Glasgow, 1454; Aberdeen, 1477. 6. In Ireland—1. Drogheda, 1426. In Brabant—Luxemburg—8. In Germany—Vienna, 1365; Hildesberg, 1386; Cologne, 1388; Erfurt, 1392; Logrono, 1401; Wurzburg 1403; Leipsic, 1409; Ratisbon 1419; Guelphstadt, 1456; Frankfurt, 1457; Basle, 1460; Pavia, 1472; Tubingen, 1486; Mainz, 1477; Wittenberg, 1527. 9. In Denmark—10. In Poland—Grodno, 1347; 11. In Denmark—12. In Sweden—Uppsala, 1477; 13. In Hungary—Fenkirchen, 1367; Olona, 1465; Presburg, 1467; 14. In Prussia—Dabau, 1320

All these express testimonies to the prevalence of education in the Middle Ages, and many others that I could transcribe if space permitted, convinced me that during Catholic times there were schools and teachers in abundance; and besides that the best education of the time, and no age can give a better, was the boon of every poor lad that had the spirit to work for it. In these times there were free schools. Free schools in the Middle Ages! Protestants that have investigated the matter frankly admit it. And that very young man, during Catholic times, could get a good education on account given of the foremost men about the time of Luther. Who was Reuchlin the famous Hebrew scholar? The son of very poor parents. Who was Erasmus—a well educated by a monastic order. Who was Martin Luther—the son of an armorer. Who was Luther himself—the son of a common miner. We are told that Luther, who received Catholic education, was a prime Latinist and a fair Greek, when only twelve years old. Compare this with the vulgar report that the great aim of the Catholics has been to keep poor people in ignorance. One thing I know well, that if Luther had been a Cornish miner's son, in the beginning of the 16th century, instead of a German miner's son, the beginning of the 16th century, his name would never be seen in history. Since the "Reformation" few miner's sons, in Cornwall, have seen much of the schoolmaster's face; they know more about washing tin than construing Latin. True enough, a few favored ones sometimes managed to pick up, in sundry ways and divers forms, a little reading, some writing, and a little arithmetic; but the majority have had to be contented with much less. It was lucky for Luther that he was not born in a Protestant country.

These facts and considerations satisfied me that to rail at Catholics for checking mental progress and to applaud Protestants in for giving a knowledge of letters to the world, is a matchless instance of contemptible ignorance. But it is still insisted upon by certain classes of professed men. One of them is the hungry Argus that hovers around social and political questions in quest of free meals. The "Dark Ages" is often his favorite theme. To him it is an indefinite period, and a profoundly dark one; but if he knows nothing about the subject he knows his audience. One of his expressions is in the "intellectual stupor of the Dark Ages;" he calls the "education of the masses" the product and patronized adjunct of Protestantism. His discourse is a medley of historical errors, stale yarns, and expressions of contempt for the ignorant old people that used to live upon the earth. His audience, those who boast