

“What an Article In Donahue’s Did”

(By Rev. J. T. Roche.)

In the Christmas number of Donahoe’s for 1898, there appeared an article by a Nebraska priest entitled “Costly Indifference.”

It was one of those little messages, hot from the heart, which sometimes effect their purpose far better than more ambitious and elaborate productions.

January 25th, 1899.

Reverend Dear Father:—

I have just read with a great deal of interest your article in the December number of “Donahoe’s Magazine,” entitled “Costly Indifference,”

I am forcibly impressed with the sentences: “Perhaps in the days to come, wealthy Catholics may come to realize that they can build themselves enduring monuments, by providing from the abundance which the Lord has given them places of worship for such as have the misfortune to be placed in the unhappy circumstances to which I refer,”

My object in writing to you is to express the wish that those twenty localities may shortly be supplied with little churches, and as a starter to offer to build one.

I desire it as a memorial to my two darling children whom I lost with diphtheria within a week of another ten years ago—to-day being the anniversary of the first one being attacked with that dread disease.

I cannot help feeling that this pious thought emanated from the fond and loving hearts of my idolized little ones now in heaven; and that they prompted me to take up the December number of Donahoe’s, which had been discarded for the wastebasket.

An application to the Tabernacle Society of this city will, I am sure, be the means of providing the little church with the necessary vestments, etc.

Very truly yours,

As a sequel to the above letter there stands in the town of Bruno, Nebraska, a beautiful little church, which is at once a source of pride to the town and a source of consolation and vast spiritual profit to the faithful, who are the beneficiaries of a good man’s generosity.

The condition of that town at the time the church was built was the condition of hundreds of similar localities in the West. Catholic parents came thither and settled down, when the country was new and churches and priests were few and far between.

The West has grown so rapidly that it has been difficult for the Church to keep pace with its wond-

drous development. A town springs up in a few years. The people flock thither. There is no place of Catholic worship. There is none found with zeal and energy enough to inaugurate the building of a church; or it may be that the poverty of pioneer days renders them incapable of such an undertaking.

I have seen churches built in communities where it was thought there were very few Catholics; and have later been astonished to find so many ready to identify themselves with the Church of their fathers. This has been well exemplified in the case of the Bruno parish. Moved by the touching circumstances in which their church had its inception, the vast majority of those of Catholic extraction cheerfully came forward and did everything in their power to make their newly-organized congregation a success.

The people’s appreciation of their benefactor’s munificence may be gathered from the newspaper accounts of the church’s dedication, following is from the Lincoln “State Journal” of that date:—

“Tuesday was a gala day in Bruno. Never before in the history of the town was there such an out-pouring of the people, as assembled on this occasion to witness the solemn ceremony of the church’s dedication. Early in the morning people commenced to gather from all points of the compass, until fully two thousand people had congregated.

The church, which was dedicated under the invocation of St. Anthony of Padua, is in every respect, one of the prettiest frame churches in the diocese.

The principal benefactor of the church has been a gentleman living in the East, who, as a consequence of an article in the Christmas number of Donahoe’s Magazine, conceived the idea of building it as a memorial to two of his children who fell victims to diphtheria some years ago.

Whilest this is not the first or greatest act of its kind on the part of a Catholic layman, it is at least deserving of more than passing mention. The spirit of self-sacrifice, faith and fatherly piety of such an act, will, for years to come, be an inspiration to the Catholics of this little western mission.

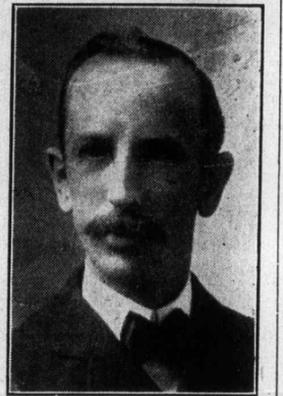
I have often thought that if I were rich in the ordinary acceptance of the term I would do two things:—First, I would build here and there in the neglected towns and villages of the Great West a little church; and secondly, I would contribute to the support of a band of priests, whose duty it would be to go from place to place and explain Catholic doctrines and practices to Catholic and Protestant alike.

The last, however, to get credit in

a matter of this kind is the magazine itself. Magazines are supposed to be incapable of acquiring merit. They go on unobtrusively fighting the battles of the Church, and often striving after high ideals and high standards in the midst of difficulties and disappointments, which sometimes try the souls of editors and managers. Here and there they are consoled by the knowledge that their work is bearing fruit; but that knowledge is tardily and sometimes grudgingly supplied. The fact nevertheless remains, that whether they receive credit or not, the mightiest agency for righteousness in the country to-day is the Catholic magazine and the Catholic periodical.—Donahoe’s Magazine.

Catholic Sailors’ Club.

The second of the series of weekly concerts of the Catholic Sailors’ Club, was held on Wednesday in the large public hall of the Club. It was conducted under the auspices of the Knights of Columbus, and was largely attended.



MR JOHN P. KAVANAGH.

ceedings, referred to the good work which the Club was performing. The programme was most varied and included the names of well known local talent. The songs of the visiting seamen were exceptionally well rendered, and most heartily applauded as were all the performers.

Amongst those present in the audience were noticed: Hon. Dr. Guerin, M.L.A., Mr. F. B. McNamee, president of the Club; Mr. B. McNally, vice-president of the Club; Mr. P. F. McCaffrey, Grand President C.M.B.A., Quebec County; Mr. G. A. Carpenter, Grand Deputy, C.M.B.A., Canada Council; Prof. P. J. Shea, organist of St. Ann’s, and many others. The concerts are growing more popular each week. The arrangements in connection with the car service are excellent.

Catholic Societies.

Y. I. L. AND B.A.—The annual meeting of the Young Irishmen’s Literary and Benefit Association was held this week, and the attendance of the members was large. The annual reports of the Committee of Management and secretary treasurer were read, which bore evidence that this well known and long established organization is in a flourishing condition.

The election of officers for the ensuing term resulted as follows: President, J. P. Cunningham; 1st vice-president, T. J. Murphy; 2nd vice-president, P. O’Flynn; hon. treasurer, J. Lyons; secretary treasurer, J. J. Rankin; librarian, J. F. Nolan; marshal, P. J. McElroy. Advisory Board, M. J. Power, W. Tracy, J. O’Grady and J. Leonard.

Irish Humor.

It looks as though wit and humor are indigenous in Ireland but exotic in England and Scotland when you find the English and Scots humorist usually laughing at his subject and the Irish with his. In Dickens’ novels, for instance, and in those of Mr. Barrie, the peasant personages say their humorous things in wooden unconsciousness of their humor, but what character in any Irish play or novel says a humorous thing—other than a bull—unconsciously?

“I joke w’ great deeficulty,” says the Scotsman; but the difficulty with the Irishman is to refrain from joking. Hence I think one characteristic of Irish wit and humor—its lightness of touch and tread. It needs but a light touch to strike a match on a prepared surface, and the surface of the Irish mind is always prepared for a joke.

I cannot resist quoting here a similar comment made on senile agility by an old beggar woman which the late Father Ryan overheard in Harcourt street. The Catholic dean, a septuagenarian, broke off a conversation with Father Ryan in order to hurry after and catch a passing tram, to the amazed admiration of the old beggar woman. “Yerrah, look at the ould dane,” she cried more to herself than to Father Ryan, “skippin’ about like a new-married flea!”

Archbishop Whately, who delighted to shock conventions, was sitting and swinging on the rails which fence the green opposite his palace, playing with his dog, when two old Catholic ladies approached. “That’s the archbishop!” whispered one to the other, who thinking it must be the Roman Catholic archbishop, exclaimed rapturously, “Ah, the dear, darlin’ man! As innocent and as playful as a blessed lamb!”

And here I may note a significant contrast—explicable historically—between popular and literary Irish wit and humor. Literary Irish wit and humor, being those of the Pale and of the ascendancy class, are cheerful and good-natured, whereas popular Irish wit and humor, being those of a people who for centuries have been oppressed and suppressed, are sarcastic and sardonic. “Pasquinade” is a word which dates back to a day and to a city in which suppression was pushed to the last turn of the screw, and it is probably to the character of their history that the Italians owe their just reputation of being the most sarcastic people in Europe.

Why otherwise should Irish literary wit and humor have the singular merit of good nature? Singular, since ninety-nine hundredths of all the recorded wit of the world is ill-natured and owes its currency to its ill nature. It is preserved by its brine. “I hear Mr. Rogers,” said a lady friend to the poet, whose tongue cut like a sharp razor, “I hear, Mr. Rogers, that you are in the habit of saying very ill-natured things.”

It is much to its credit, therefore, that Irish literary wit is sweet-natured. How tart, for instance, is the wit of the wittiest of English comedies—the comedies of the Restoration—of Congreve, Wycherley, Vanbrugh, with one exception, that of an Irishman, Farquhar. “Farquhar,” says Hazlitt, “of all the dram-

atists of the Restoration alone makes us laugh from pleasure, not from malice.” The same critic again, after saying of Sheridan’s “School for Scandal” that “it was the most finished and faultless comedy we have,” adds, “Besides the wit and ingenuity of this play there is a genial spirit of frankness and generosity which does the heart good.” How sweet-natured, too, the humor of Goldsmith and of Dick Steele. By the way, it is to a comedy of Steele’s that Sydney Smith pays the compliment of selecting from it an ideal specimen of humor. Here it is:

In Dick Steele’s “The Funerary”—what a title for a comedy!—the undertaker arranges the mutes in the order of the forlornness of their countenances—the most lugubrious-looking near the coffin, the least near the door. When, however, he turns to give the place of honor near the corpse to his premier knight of the rueful countenance he finds to his disgust his countenance rueful no longer. “You infernal scoundrel!” he exclaims. “Didn’t I take you out of a great man’s service? Didn’t I give you the pleasure of receiving wages for the first time? Didn’t I raise your wages from ten shillings a week to fifteen, from fifteen to twenty? Yet I declare to God I believe the more wages I give you the more cheerful you look!”

Even in that poem which anger might well have inspired—for no one received more frequent, stupid or brutal provocation from his friends than Goldsmith—even in “Retaliation,” where is the retaliation? His humor plays there upon the faults, follies, and frailties of these friends like moonlight upon a ruin, showing, indeed, gaps and rents and breaches of decay but softening them even while it shows them. Indeed, Irishmen, from Farquhar to Goldsmith, have done a finer thing even than write the finest comedies in the English tongue—they have made us love as heartily as they have made us laugh at human nature.

But popular Irish wit is as mordant as Irish literary wit is genial; for the rollicking Irish humor of carmen, boatmen, and guides is purely historic, a farce deliberately played to tickle and catch—as trout are caught by tickling—the English tourist.

Here is a significant encounter a friend of mine overheard between a Dublin vendor of oranges and an English lady tourist who had bargained down the fruit to the lowest farthing. As the English lady hurried away with her purchase the orange woman volleyed after her a shower of Irish. “What are you saying?” asked the English lady turning back. “Sure I was wishing the grace of God to folley yer ladyship while ye live an’ the heavens to be yer bed when ye die.” This, however, was a free translation of what she really had said in Irish. “Ye’re the manest anatomy of famine that ever was raked out of the embers of hell.”

The humor of the Irish peasant who is not playing the fool to the order or the taste of the tourist is almost always sardonic. Here, for example, is the retort of a Cork peasant to a mild joke of an English parson. The parson complained to my friend, with whom he was on a visit, that he had never heard—what he had so often heard—of the wit of the Irish peasant. “But have you ever spoken to an Irish peasant?” “No.” “Then let us try the next man we meet.” The next man they met was leading by a halter a horse with a white blaze on its face, which suggested to the parson the mild remark: “What a white face your horse has got!” “Faix thin, it’s yer own face ’ud be as white if it had been as long in the halther!” retorted the peasant in a tone which suggested that the wish was father to the thought.

And I shall not soon forget the sardonic tone of a remark with which a Dublin beggar woman cut down at one stroke my sister and myself—myself as a miff, my sister as a virago—since she took us for husband and wife. Having begged vainly from my sister she slunk behind us and groaned as from the bottom of her heart, “Ah thin, God help the poor man that couldn’t say ‘No’ to ye!”

Yet more scathing was the rebuke of another beggar woman which an Irish barrister assured me he had overheard in a Catholic Church in Sligo. As the bishop was expected the church was so overcrowded that a grandly dressed lady had much difficulty in elbowing her way through

the congregation towards the confessional. An old beggar woman who resented being hustled aside by her: “Ah thin now, do ye think nobody’s got a reserved case but yerself!” a “reserved case” being the case of a crime so heinous that only a bishop could absolve it.—Richard A. King, in “The Gael.”

GIFTS TO BISHOP CONATY.

On April 28, the lay students of the Catholic University presented the retiring rector, Bishop Conaty, with a handsome gold-mounted cane. The students of Caldwell Hall presented to him a gold clock.

A GREAT EUCHRE PARTY.

Over 5,000 persons attended the concert euchre and reception given recently in New York for the benefit of the Catholic Reading Room for Sailors, of which the Rev. W. F. Dougherty is director, and fully three thousand played euchre.

THE KNIGHTS’ CAMPAIGN.

The Knights of Columbus in Trenton, New Jersey, has opened a vigorous campaign against the use in the Hewitt Training School in that city of “Painter’s History of Education”—a book reeking with bigotry and indecency, and evoking frequent protests from the Catholic students.

THE IRISH PARTY.

An appeal has been issued by the United Irish League asking Irishmen throughout the world to start immediate subscriptions to the Parliamentary Fund of 1903. It is signed by John Redmond, chairman of the League, and the Right Rev. Patrick O’Donnell, Bishop of Raphoe, and James O’Mara, treasurers of the League election fund.

A JUVENILE COURT.

Referring to the recent organization of a court for juvenile offenders in San Francisco, the “Monitor” of that city remarks:— Juvenile courts have been found to fill a long felt want in other communities, and there is every reason to look for beneficial results from the establishment of such a tribunal in this city.

SUCCESSOR TO FATHER MCGUCKIN.

Rev. Father James Fallon, O.M.I., of Ottawa University, mentioned as successor to the late Father McGuckin, of the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary, Vancouver, B.C., is another son of Mr. and Mrs. Dominick Fallon, Brock street, Kingston, says the “Canadian Freeman,” and like his distinguished brother, Rev. Dr. Fallon, Buffalo, N.Y., is a remarkably clever priest. He is 27 years of age.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

The dispute between the Rt. Rev. Michael F. Forman, Bishop of Treves, and the German Government, regarding teaching in the Catholic Girls’ Schools, has ended with the Government yielding to the Bishop’s contention that German and history shall be taught by a Catholic teacher. The text books formerly used are abolished and certain Catholic text books are substituted.

A PASTOR’S ANNIVERSARY.

In honor of the twentieth anniversary of the pastorate of Very Rev. J. H. Conroy, V.G., a reception was given in the Opera House recently, says the Ogdensburg “Catholic Courier,” which was inclusive in character, for not only his own parishioners were out in force, but hundreds representing every denomination in the city took advantage of the occasion to congratulate the popular rector of St. Mary’s cathedral. It was estimated that fully 1,000 people shook hands with the reverend gentleman during the evening.

Liberty Of Conscience

Liberty of conscience that the soul possess religious life according authority of God, an independently of every on the part of the church is exercised, in by the triple homage revealed truths, of h of the future life, an charity which domin eign good. When the exhibit themselves ex tations of the soul w from all human cont quently from all restr

Liberty of conscience is otherwise when the exhibits itself by exte for example, Chris hope assert themselves writings, by monume pomp of public worsh the love of God be in works of charity, tions consecrated to ance, or in a hierarc voted to the propaga is morally beautiful ligious authority,” s tritious Catholic ora “has for its mission. But the domain of lib the soul is mistress she endures not the on her by her weakn sions, she is of such proud race, that she herself freely to him ern her.”

The authority, by man soul has right religious life, must power addressing its But the political po very nature, force, a co-active. Religious oblige us to believe truths, to love God to submit our will to the civil law constrai taxation, or even r when necessary. The not be completely in her religious life, completely independe power.

Now I will try to Catholic Church in twenty centuries has persistent and unflin of liberty of conscie in establishing herse its of the Roman Em the same time con ence of conscience in taining to religion, the temporal powe sovereign independe erment of souls. b between the two po tal and tempora hitherto unheard of was the special opp with such dire opp part of the Roman

When the Gospel the world there was ity, that of the Cae ed to its title of A Sovereign Pontiff. No lesser pretension up beside the temp other completely in matters spiritual. for the first time t authorities reigning oritory and the same charged with condu their immortal desti them in the intim thoughts, their affe wills; the other ch material interests, force respect for th ity for all; the frs pendent, by the na sion, of all tempor remained within its second sovereign in interests of the pre ordinate to the spir ft came in contact taining to the sac soul.

Liberty of consci say the right of th her religious life, external political established by the