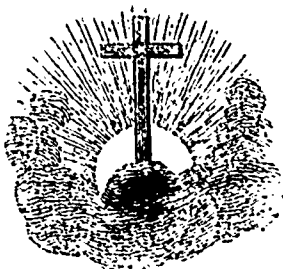


☞ All letters and remittances must be forwarded, free of postage, to the Editor, the Very Rev. Wm. P. McDonald, Hamilton.



THE CATHOLIC.

Hamilton, C. D.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 12, 1913.

☞ Our Agents are again respectfully requested to exert themselves in collecting and forwarding to us the sums due in their neighbourhoods. This is getting every day to be the more imperative, since the present volume is rapidly drawing to a close, when, if we are obliged to retire, we wish to do so in honourably liquidating the obligations which non-paying subscribers have obliged us to contract, and which at once rests with them to see attended to.

We take great pleasure in giving publicity to the following Address, from his people, to our reverend and much esteemed brother clergyman, the Rev. Edward Gordon, of Niagara, on his departure for England, to pay a short visit to his relatives here. We wish him a safe and agreeable passage home, and a speedy return.

The Address bears the signatures of his whole congregation.

To the Reverend Edward Gordon, Catholic Priest of Niagara.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

As you are about to leave us for some months, for the purpose of visiting a brother in England, whom you have not seen for many years, and who, no doubt, is deservedly dear to you; we, the undersigned members of the Catholic congregation of this town, cannot suffer you to depart without availing ourselves of the occasion to convey to you, as well our deep and grateful sense and admiration of the zeal, piety, and humility, with which you have, even when suffering under severe bodily affliction, discharged the functions of your sacred ministry during the ten years you have had charge of this mission, as our good wishes for your happiness and safe return amongst us.

If, in the ordinary intercourse of life, an acquaintance of such long standing is calculated to ripen into friendship, how much more intense, then, must be those feelings of affectionate regard which we must entertain for you, looking upon you, not only as our friend in temporal affairs, but as our friend, adviser, and Pastor, in spiritual matters. You who, in the discharge of your sacred calling, like a faithful sentinel, have never failed to

watch, to pray, to warn, to reprove, to exhort, to encourage, as prudence and necessity required; and who, in our hours of sickness and danger, have been always ready to administer to the soul those consolations which the balmy influence of our holy religion alone can impart.

To be deprived of your presence and services even for a short time, however reasonable and desirable for your health, your temporary absence may be, it may be easily imagined, cannot be productive to herwise than of regret; and while we with pleasure look forward to your speedy return, we beg to assure you that we shall not fail to offer up our prayers to the Almighty disposer of events, for your safety during your absence, and that your return to us may be accompanied with the blessing of renewed health, without which this world ceases to have charms, and in the full enjoyment of that gratification which you now so fondly anticipate in the expectation of shortly seeing a brother, for whom you must entertain an ardent affection.

Accept, then, reverend and dear Sir, our sincere wishes for your prosperity and happiness, and your speedy and safe return to us, and believe us,

Rev. and Dear Sir,

Your Obedient Servants.

[Here follow the signatures.]

REPLY.

GENTLEMEN:

It is not in my power to make a suitable acknowledgment for the very flattering compliment, of which your affectionate address is the medium. I had no expectation that such honourable notice would have thus been taken of my poor humble labours while you were under my spiritual care; but allow me to express my fear that you have overrated my services, and in the warmth of your generous feelings, and affectionate regard, have, by accepting the will for the deed, awarded to me that which was not justly mine.

To meet your approbation in the discharge of the various duties of my sacred calling, has ever been my constant study; and now, on the eve of my departure, it affords me no ordinary share of consolation and happiness to find, that my efforts have not been altogether unsuccessful.

The individual who is the cause of my absentsing myself for a short time from you, is an only brother, in the decline of life—a brother, to whom I am bound by every endearing tie—one to whom, under Providence, I owe my conversion to the Catholic faith, and who has never ceased to exhort me to the practice and faithful discharge of all my spiritual and temporal duties.

Accept, Gentlemen, my sincere thanks for your kind and affectionate Address; and while I gratefully acknowledge your charity in offering up your prayers for me, I beg to assure you that I shall not forget you in mine.

Farewell, then, Gentlemen, and may that charity, peace, and harmony towards each other, which, to my unspeakable delight, I have witnessed so long happily existing among you—and which, to your credit be it said, you have ever manifested

towards your fellow townsmen of every denomination—long continue; and may I find you all on my return in good health and spirits.

Gentlemen—farewell!

PRAYERS AND GRACES OUT OF SEASON.

We think that some of the Parsons are ever zealously pious and prayerful, out of season, at times. On the public steamboats where, for mere locomotion, persons of every creed, and of every shade and hue of religious faith, are brought together, these preachers are not content with retiring to their closets and saying their prayers, as true Christians should do, but must needs beseech the Captains for their consent, and then offer up graces, long and nasal, or prayers, fuller of sound than sense, to the inexpressible annoyance of those who do not belong to their faith. And, if a person asserts his right to immunity from these religious *boluses*, forced down his unwilling throat, he is denounced as most rude and impolite. It is well known that in our community, persons claim the right to think and judge for themselves in matters of religion, and it is passing strange indeed, if the chance occupant of a hotel bar-room or parlour; or of a steam boat cabin, must, willing or not, be forced to drink in the religious rhapsodies and rant of men, in whom he recognizes no ministerial character, and with whom he is unwilling to hold religious communion.

On these occasions, when all present agree to let the Rev. Apostle hold forth, it is very well. Let him pray long, loud, and deep, till his very clamour itself shake the skies like summer thunder—to this we can have no objection. But where such display of religion not only is not agreeable, but is really offensive to some of the travellers, who take the steamboat, or enter the tavern, not to hear prayers, but for their own convenience, paying highly for the same, it is intolerable that they should be placed in the alternative of seeming to be impolite, or of sacrificing their religious scruples and opinions by a silent approval of sentiments and principles which they consider erroneous. Who is the true gentleman and christian? Is it the man who intrudes his religious opinions on you against your will—who catches you in a corner, and stuffs you with his reveries and views—who keeps dinning into your ears his most sage conclusions; or, is it the man who, in private, will, when proper time, place, and occasion present themselves, labour publicly in the cause of truth and religion, but who respects the recognised rights and privileges of others too much to force his peculiar views upon any against their own consent? It is easy to answer this query.

Some of these Rev'd. Gentlemen, who travel the country in a most prayerful spirit, seem to labour under a kind of hallucination, and bear themselves, not with the meekness of Apostles, but with all the loftiness and high mindedness of temporal lords. Every eye must drop in their presence; every bo-om, in holy awe, must repress its breathing; every tongue must cease to wag; and *attentis auribus*, all

must wait, with reverential expectation, to hear the dicta of the oracle. Are they the lords of the soil? Are they now the nursing fathers of the faith? Have they the right on land, and the right on water, to drill us all according to the arbitrary tactics of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the changing discipline of the General Assembly? Shall the steamboats be made their portable meeting houses, and the bar room counters their ever ready pulpits, and the hotel tables their committee boards? And will there be no public place in which an honest man can breathe a mouthful of air untainted with the errors of Calvinism, and where he can escape from the villainous smell of those terrible sulphurous fires in which are burning the millions, "by unalterable decree," condemned from all eternity, including "infants not a span long?" Must we begin to eat, and cease to eat, rise up and sit down, walk and stand, according to "the spirit of the standards," and shall the very cabin of a steamboat be subjected to the severe blue laws of puritan strictness, which makes cheerfulness a sin, and denounces a smile or a laugh as the height of impiety?

There is something absolutely ridiculous, as well as provoking, in such pretensions, and we enter an unqualified demurrer to the ungrounded claim advanced by these Rev. gentlemen to exercise jurisdiction over river and stream, turnpike road and hotel, as if, wherever they appeared, the whole spiritual concerns of men must be taken under their special care, and all be forced to bow the head to receive their blessing, or bend the knee around them while they pray.

When we enter their churches of our own accord, or attend their religious assemblies, we expect them to officiate, and feel that even seeming disrespect would be unworthy of a gentleman;—but the case is very different when they come to stop us on the highway, and ask us to hear a prayer, or demand us to kneel with them in a steamboat cabin, or stop us at our meals, that they may first bless the dish, for the contents of which we have paid our money. The fact is, they have no right to force their ministry upon us, and they will do well to wait till we have asked them. What would be said of a Catholic priest, who should imitate the conduct of some of these Rev. gentlemen? And yet the Catholic priest has, in *extenso*, all the rights as a minister or as a man, to which they can possibly pretend. But he has too much sense and politeness to intrude himself upon those who do not think and feel with him on matters of religion, and he knows, too, the man most displayful of religious zeal, and who stands at the street corner making prayers loud and long, is not always most pious at heart. He may have broad Phylacteries, and exhibit externally great interest for the law of God, and be no better than a Pharisee. *Qui vult capere, capiat.* Let the man, whom the cap fits, wear it.—*Catholic Advocate.*

☞ Father Mathew's visit to America is put off for another year.