

## The Church in Canada.

Under this heading will be collected and preserved all obtainable data bearing upon the history and growth of the Church in Canada. Contributions are invited from those having in their possession any material that might properly come for publication in this department.

### BISHOP MACDONELL.

Prior to the Bishop's departure for England, a farewell dinner was given him by the Celtic Society of Upper Canada, at Carmino's Hotel, Kingston. There was a large attendance of the Bishop's friends, including nearly all the prominent residents of the city, and the officers of the garrison. The chair was taken by the Sheriff of the district, supported on either side by the Bishop and his coadjutor. The toasts and speeches usual on such occasions were given and made, and the affair passed off to the satisfaction of all present. A few weeks afterwards the Bishop commenced his journey, and was accompanied to the steamboat "Dolphin," sometime known by her American name, "Blackhawk," lying at the foot of Princess Street, by a large number of his personal friends; the old bell of St. Joseph's Church pealing forth a parting salute. This bell was one of the institutions of Kingston; for a long time the only thing of the kind, and always the best thing of the kind that the town could boast—like the bells of most Catholic Churches, it was on the go almost continually from morning till night, and its fine, clear tones were well known to every Kingstonian. It was cast by the widely-known firm of Mears, London, the same establishment which many years subsequently furnished the chimes for the church of Notre Dame, Montreal. The belfry in which it was suspended being of rather slight construction, shook from base to apex whenever the bell was rung. On one occasion Mr. W. P. Macdonald, the Vicar-General, happening to notice this agitation, exclaimed: "Dear me, how that spire shakes; I am afraid the Cross will fall." Old Mr. Walter McCuniffe, a well-known wag of those days, who stood by, was ready with a rejoinder, "Many a cow shakes her tail, but it does not fall off for all that."

When the big bell, now in St. Mary's Cathedral, was procured, the services of the faithful old monitor were dispensed with. It was sent into exile, being, as some say, given or disposed of to the mission at Smith's Falls; of this the writer knows nothing. But he may be allowed to state that from early youth he was a curious investigator of the mysteries of steeples, bells, and clocks; there was scarcely a steeple, bell, or clock, in the city of Boston—where most of his school days were spent—that he had not tully explored, and with the history of which he was not perfectly familiar. Some fifty years ago the revolutionary government of Spain, pressed for money, and animated with the true spirit of reform, confiscated a great number of church bells, and sent them to New York to be disposed of to the best advantage. The bells were arranged in rows on the sidewalks of Broadway; some few were restored to their legitimate use, but the greater number were scattered abroad among schools, factories, railways, and steamboats; employed, in fact, every way in which a bell can be employed, excepting always the purpose for which it was originally intended. It was reported that one of these bells had strayed as far as Kingston and was actually hanging in the belfry of St. Andrew's Church, Princess Street. Wishing to ascertain the true state of the case, the writer, who happened, in company with a young friend, to be passing the church one Sunday afternoon, thought he would look in and see for himself whether or no the thing was as affirmed. The door leading to the belfry was locked, and upon applying for admission to the proper functionary, that worthy answered: "Na! na! mon, ye canna gang there the day." Venturing to ask a reason for this unexpected rebuke, the writer was informed that it was the Sabbath day, on which no person was allowed to see the bell; that act being considered by the worthy sexton a serious breach of the moral law. The writer then en-

quired if the bell was rung on Sunday, as in his estimation that operation required hard labour, and as such might be considered a greater breach of the Sabbath than the mere looking at an inanimate piece of metal.

It is time to return to Bishop Macdonell, whom we left standing on the deck of the old steamer "Dolphin," taking leave of his friends. Easily moved on such occasions, the writer could not conceal his emotions. The Bishop held out his hand: "Wait till I return, William." These were his parting words; he never again saw his episcopal city.

During the writer's residence at Brockville he received one letter from the Bishop; it has been kept as a relic. The signature of the Bishop given with his portrait some numbers back, was taken from this letter, which reads as follows:—

Kingston, 5th March, 1839.

MY DEAR WILLIAM,—This will be handed to you by the Rev. Philip O'Reily, who is appointed your parish priest until you shall have made up your mind to become priest yourself; by that time if Mr. O'Reily does not give full and ample satisfaction you may have a chance, and in the mean time I hope that you will give every aid and assistance to Mr. O'Reily, as he is very lately ordained, and has little or no experience, nor any acquaintance whatever with his parishioners. Your knowledge of the characters he has to deal with, may be of great use to him as well as your assistance in arranging the necessaries about the church and altar. If your time permit your accompanying him to Kitley, it would be of great service to him. I dare say James Macdonell and his wife would come from Bastard to meet you at Kitley, if they are made acquainted when you are there. Compliments to both your sisters and their husbands, and believe me, my dear William, to be yours affectionately,

(Signed), †ALEX. MACDONELL.

Mr. James Macdonell, mentioned above, was the father of Rev. Mother Antoinette, the present Superior of St. Joseph's Convent, Toronto; his wife, Amelia, was the writer's cousin, daughter of Captain Miles Macdonell, and widow of Mr. William Jones, of Brockville.

W. J. MACDONELL.

### "MEDITATIONS OF A PARISH PRIEST."

Among the vast number of publications constantly issuing from the press of an entire world, there appears, now and then, a book, the work of some genius, which draws forth not merely a passing cry of praise and wonder, but gives birth to the conviction that this is a book destined to live for ages, perhaps forever. It is to be one of the "eternities," as Carlyle would have bombastically declared.

One feels a strange sensation in looking at the first copies of such a book. Here is the title, there is the author's name; both the title and the author's name are to go down together to all succeeding ages. Out of all the millions now toiling and suffering, succeeding and failing, upon this busy, mysterious world, his name will be one of the few well known when the present has become the past. Among the thousands striving and longing for fame, this man, unknown a few years ago, has quietly and suddenly stepped from a position of obscurity into the foremost ranks of the world's present writers and thinkers, and has already been recognized as worthy to join earth's children of immortality.

Contemporary opinion is often woefully wrong in its estimation of merit and prophecy of future renown. Each succeeding age often laughs with scorn at the dogmas of its predecessor; but if this be the rule, Abbé Joseph Roux will be the exception.

"Meditations of a Parish Priest," and from France! Infidel-ridden France produces a great author, and this great author is a priest! It seems too strange to be true, that a simple Abbé should be acknowledged as a master-mind by the leading lights of continental literature, but being true, what a superlative excellence must his works possess. Could a mediocre production withstand the sneers and criticisms of a swarm of critics, hostile to the