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The Dedication of the Trappists' Church.

It was a pleasant and delightful visit, not an excursion, as it lacked all the seemingly necessary characteristics of one. The bustle, the hustle, the hurry, the flurry, the overcrowding and noise, and all other incidentals, which, though they certainly make an excitement, make also a lasting and disagreeable impression.

The accommodation provided by the worthy Messrs. McKenzie and Mann was commodious—mark my words commodious, and excellent—there were even some empty seats. The train was scheduled to leave at eight a.m., and at eight a.m. it left—to shunt up and down and take a little jaunt over every little switch and side-track in the three miles of yards? No. Without one single back-up or let-up, to go directly to St. Norbert, our destination. The train stopped at the gate of the grounds—not at the station.

Passing the little turn-stile, we entered a delightful wood, resplendent still with all the beauty of morn, on tree and shrub, and alas! also on the foot-path. It was slightly destructful to dainty footwear; but who cared for that? The ladies tucked up their pretty frocks and tripped gaily on; the gentlemen—well I was so busy picking my own steps, (in life) I don't know what they did. However we all arrived at La Salle river, which is still quite high; over this, was a single-file foot-bridge, erected, I believe, for the occasion. It was a little shaky, but then all bridges are. Having crossed this we were upon the Trappists' grounds. A feeling of contentment permeates the very atmosphere, and makes an impression on the mind, even before one is well up the river bank. This is the Trappists' home.

Their buildings are on the left, to the south as we approach; all are plain wooden though homely structures, except the new stone and brick church, the dedication of which was the object of our excursion, visit, I mean. Our attention was drawn by the figures clad in brown, who passed up and down in and out, evidently very busy. Others, we noticed in white. The difference in garb puzzled not a few of us. We afterwards learned that those of the brown habit are Trappist Lay Brothers, the working class. They are not priests, and never will be as they are not educated for that. They follow the trades, and agriculture, all of course, within their own grounds. Those of the white habit are the priests, who spend much more time in prayer. For instance their office which is recited every day, takes five hours. The brothers do not, and are not required to say this. What I found remarkable was the healthy appearance of these monks. I knew they rose very early, worked hard, ate no meat, so I unconsciously expected to see dull eyes and pale, emaciated, stolid features. Well any lady of the land could conscientiously envy their complexions in most cases, but above all, and in every case their eyes. I was at a ball game the night before, and I saw more unhealthy looking men amongst the teams actually playing, than I saw amongst the St. Norbert monks.

The blessing of the church was followed by Mass, no different of course from any Mass, sung in any church, in any part of Catholic Christendom. I always feel so glad about this. The singing was somewhat different to that which we are accustomed to hear. They keep wonderful time (it would delight a hand-master's heart) and sing with a soft harmony. The remarkable thing is the way they stop; it was the stopping, not the singing, which struck me; so suddenly, yet without the least jar; you do not expect it, so it naturally is sur-

prising. Reverend Mgr. Ritchot, the donor of the lands, was present also representatives from the different religious communities of the city and St. Boniface; they all sat within the sanctuary and a very imposing spectacle it made. The upper or sanctuary end of the church is wider than the body. This leaves a large space for the main altar, which is so placed, that behind and around it, in the form of a crescent are seven small altars, five of which are dedicated to Saints, one to the Sacred Heart, and one to the Blessed Virgin. All are separated by white pillars upon which the morning sun shone with pleasing brilliancy. The church is remarkably well lighted. There were no dark shadows or uncertain lights, which, we will all acknowledge, we are always unreasonably accustomed to associate with a monastery. This dark, lonesome sensation was entirely absent. A glance at the monks dispels the feeling that one is required to look solemn and sombre. If the sunlight fell with pleasing effect on the white interior of the church, which makes us forget that it is the plainest we have ever seen and certainly, the most devoid of ornament, there is a light, not falling, but emanating from the countenances of these monks, compelling us to gaze and gaze again, upon features which, though they may be plain, are assuredly comforting and holy, stamped with stability of purpose and strong in the knowledge of right.

Mass was followed by an excellent dinner, the most delicious and unusual appetizer of which was the manners of the ladies and young girls of St. Norbert who served. It was beautiful. Kindness and graciousness was the prevailing flavor of everything.

Through the courtesy of the Rev. Fathers Drummond and Cahill and the chivalry of a French gentleman, we succeeded in securing a conveyance by means of which we could visit the village of St. Norbert. This is a peaceful and prosperous little place on the east bank of the Red. Here is situate the Shrine of Our Lady erected by Mgr. Ritchot. St. Norbert's, the parish church, is one of the prettiest for its size, that can be seen anywhere in this country. There is a very pleasing proportion about the whole place, inside and out. Quite an effect has been produced by finishing the walls, surrounding the altar, with five large paintings. The first on the left is Moses giving the tables of the law to his people, followed by one representing repentant Mary Magdalen; the third directly above the altar, is the conversion of St. Norbert. Of an aristocratic family he belonged to a religious order, and was by no means faithful in the performance of his duties. One day while walking along a road he was suddenly struck by a light from heaven which led eventually to the reform and finally to the sanctification of his life. This light striking him is the picture. His surprise at the awful suddenness is splendidly brought out. Of the five pictures this is my favorite, especially in coloring. The others are "Our Lord giving St. Peter the Keys of the Church" and "The Holy Family." On the right of this Church is the bishop's home, a light-brown wooden structure surrounded by trees. On the left the Grey Nun's Convent. They welcomed us with sweet simplicity, and showed us through the place. They had seventy-one boarders, and counting day-scholars an enrollment of one hundred and forty. In one bright class room we even came across the candidates for third and second class certificates, writing under the supervision of Mr. Young, Public School Inspector. They are going to build a new school this summer, to the north of the present one. We all wish them success. I need not de-

scribe a convent. Everyone knows the wonderful cheerfulness, the contentment, the cleanliness, and the courtesy found in them all.

Returning to the Trappist's church, we attended vespers and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. While the monks were chanting the psalms, a pretty incident occurred symbolical of those holy and cheerful men. A little bird flew in, and rested on a ledge above one of the high white pillars. It did not thrust itself to the centre, but remained well in the right wing or side, of the sanctuary, twittered, seemingly with a great burst of joy a little melody, and then, quietly, as any religious, disappeared.

The ladies, no doubt were disappointed at not being permitted to visit the monastery. No further than the parlor were they allowed to enter. However we were very pleasantly assured by the monks, who are delightful conversationalists, that we will live to see the opening of their new home, three years hence. "A word to the wise." On the occasion of its dedication it will be open to the public as was the church on Wednesday. It seems queer that never again will a woman enter that church. Those who availed themselves of the chance are happy, those who did not do not know what they have missed; it is not so much what we see, as what we feel when being there.

One might suppose, and quite naturally, that those monks living within a cloister, conversing with no one, might be behind the man of the world in social functions, or be a little awkward and confused; but such was not the case; they were delightfully thoughtful, considerate and pleasant, and made the day an ideal outing. Every person was delighted with their visit. The gentlemen in charge are to be congratulated on its splendid success.

EVA. G. CONNELL.

CURRENT COMMENT

Our bright and interesting contemporary, "The Catholic Columbian," of Columbus, O., thus sums up the Chartreuse sham inquiry:

The committee of the French Chamber of Deputies Appointed to find out whether the Chartreuse monks endeavored to bribe Premier Combes to let them stay in their monastery in France, or whether Edgar Combes, son of the Prime Minister, tried to blackmail them by promising them that his father would not exile and rob them, if they would pay him a handsome fee for his services, have discovered no facts. The Monks remained silent, and the other parties to the case called one another liars, but produced no proofs. So the inquiry is without result.

The investigation was directed by the Government. It went just so far and by just such ways as the Ministry determined. It stopped when the word was passed.

But one fact remains—the committee has not vindicated Edgar Combes or his father, the Premier.

On another question, however, we cannot see eye to eye with our Columbus friend. He writes editorially:

President Schurman of Cornell University notes the fact that everywhere attendance at scientific and professional schools is outstripping the attendance at classes of the humanities. Yet, while all the outside world is forging to the front of actual life our students are kept grubbing at useless Greek roots. Will our col-

leges ever cut loose from antiquated traditions?

We devoutly hope they will not, for if they did such institutions as Cornell would go on unchecked in their great process of disintegrating and frittering away the noblest faculties of the human mind. Undoubtedly Cornell University heads the list of American and Canadian scientific schools, its laboratories are admirably equipped, its professors publish scientific monographs that show minute and accurate research; but it does not produce any thinkers, its graduates are singularly lacking in grasp of principles, they cannot correlate their multitudinous facts, their philosophy is of the flimsiest type. Were it not for the Catholic adherence to "antiquated traditions," universities of the Cornell pattern would end by destroying all truly rational thought; for nothing is so fascinating as scientific research, though few fields are so inconclusive, nothing pays so well as a great reputation for a familiarity with stanches, machines and optical instruments, in no career is it so easy to throw dust in the eyes of the vulgar crowd, and therefore that crowd rushes on its young men into that vortex of more and more specialized currents of research and bows down in mute adoration of awe-inspiring technical terms which the crowd cannot understand. But so long as our Catholic colleges do not "cut loose from antiquated traditions," so long as they stick to Greek and Latin as the best instruments of logical mental training, they will form men, real rational men, for whom the possession of a great idea is indefinitely and for ever preferable to the invention of a new gas or a new kind of light-ray. Nay more, the very sanity of those scientific specialists themselves depends upon the presence amongst them of a body of men, mentally well trained, unwarped by excessive specialization and therefore capable of pointing out the vagaries into which pure science falls when it attempts to generalize.

These reflections are confirmed by a recent experience. In April the University of Manitoba advertised in Canada, the United States and the British Isles, for professors to fill four scientific chairs and one mathematical chair. Some eighty applicants responded from both sides of the Atlantic, furnishing printed copies of testimonials from prominent university professors. All the testimonials signed by men on the staff of universities where the old traditions still hold sway showed a nice perception of degrees of merit, a fine discernment of capacities, and a moderation of form which inspired trust. On the other hand many of the testimonials from highly advertised and still more highly endowed universities of the up-to-date, anti-traditional type betrayed such a fondness for indiscriminating superlatives and glittering generalities that they inspired no confidence at all and were promptly shelved.

On Sunday last in this city the Rev. (?) William Blazowsky blessed and opened what he calls "the Polish Catholic Church, or the Independent Catholic Church." The statement put forth by himself and his followers that this is merely an offshoot from the truly Roman Catholic church of the Holy Ghost in Selkirk avenue, that it is "not a break away from the Roman Catholic faith, and that it is rather a revival of the Church as it was in the sixth century," is just the sort of claptrap with which so-called reformers deceive the unwary. The "Independent Catholic" movement is, to say the least, distinctly schismatical. Separation from the head of the Church and

the Centre of unity always is schism and therefore grievously sinful. Moreover, it implies the heretical doctrine that the Church founded by Christ can err. Of course Mr. Blazowsky, who was once a true Roman Catholic, although grave doubts are entertained as to his having ever received Holy Orders, attempts to defend his position by asserting, in the teeth of plain facts, that he holds his jurisdiction from the Latin Archbishop of Lemberg in Galicia, because, says Mr. Blazowsky, this is a missionary country in which the Galicians are not subject to the local Archbishop of St. Boniface. But, unfortunately for Mr. Blazowsky, the Latin Archbishop of Lemberg does not claim any jurisdiction in this country, and no man in this diocese can honestly pretend to be a Catholic unless he be subject to Archbishop Langevin. Besides how palpably inconsistent is the stand taken by a church claiming communion with an archbishop of the living Church of Christ in Austria in this twentieth century, and at the same time disclaiming any connection with the organic life of that same church during fourteen centuries. The history of this movement will no doubt be a repetition of the parent movement in the United States: great temporary enthusiasm among disgruntled soreheads who are Polish first and Catholic afterwards, then bitter repentance on the part of sincere dupes as soon as they discover that they have been deluded by designing notoriety-seekers, finally, total abandonment of Catholic principles by the few who remain obstinate in their schism.

Catholics who thought Mr. Hugh Armstrong, the local member for Portage la Prairie, was a gentleman, will have revised their estimate after reading his twelfth of July speech in that town. He is reported to have said—the grammar may be the Telegram reporter's, but the sentiment is Armstrong's—"thousands of immigrants were pouring in from countries where they had not enjoyed the liberty of self-government and who had been under the thralldom of the Roman Catholic Church." Orange liberty means Belfast persecution of Catholics. The "thralldom of the Catholic Church" means freedom from oath-bound, hypocritical, lying and tyrannical sects.

The dreariness of that Portage deluge of Orange oratory was relieved by the Rev. Neil Herman's witty remarks upon "What I would do if I were an Orangeman." Vigorously attacking the tendencies of certain members, he reminded them that while every tolerance of language and deed should be exercised towards opponents, he believed they might justly combat the infallibility of the Pope, for there was nothing infallible but the council of Portage la Prairie.

Burns & Oates, of London, are publishing "The Cross in Japan," a history of the mission of St. Francis Xavier, written by Cecilia Mary Caddell. The same publishers are about to reissue Lady Georgiana Fullerton's "Laurentia," a tale of the Jesuit Missions in Japan, a great favorite about forty years ago. This reawakened interest in the practically forgotten history of Christian Japan from 1550 to 1630, when more than a million Catholic Japanese lived and died in the true faith, suggests the timeliness of a good history of those stirring times and the republication of "Justo Ucondono," an historical Catholic novel dealing with that period and published in the United States 35 or 40 years ago.