

Good Friday At St. Patrick's.

In every parish throughout this city on Good Friday last the impressive and soul-inspiring Offices, and ceremony of venerating the Cross, were held, and the lesson of the saddest of all the sad events in the story of Christianity was dwelt upon in our pulpits. At St. Patrick's Church in the morning thousands of men, women and children assisted at the Holy Offices, and in the evening when Rev. M. J. McKenna preached, the sacred edifice was thronged to the doors.

Father McKenna is young in years in the priesthood, but is old in his pulpit utterances were we to judge him, not by his age, but by the effect of his voice, the order of his thought, the purity of his diction and the simplicity of his earnestness.

His voice is one of those musical ones which are capable of great depths of sympathetic feeling, or as it might be termed, suppressed emotion. It has that indescribable character of seeming to carry conviction by its very resonance, and with all this it has the support of a natural elocutionary gift. His text was:—

"And bowing His head, He gave up the ghost."

Words from the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, according to St. John.

It is no ordinary, no commonplace affair that brings me here to-night. My errand is one of sadness. I have come to you with sorrowful news, a messenger of mournful tidings. I am here to unfold for you, a sad, sad story. And, oh! it is a doleful tale to tell. How to begin or where, I am at a loss to know, so pathetic, so pitiable, is it all. Yet, Christian friends, it is my duty to perform, and no feelings of mine or yours shall stand in the way.

To-day at three o'clock the Light Supreme of Life Divine went out. To-night we are left alone in darkness. Gaze upon our Altar, the Altar of Him, of that extinguished Light Divine, that Altar we used to love to look upon, and which ever seemed so cheerful and so hopeful to us; behold: it is naked, it is bare and cheerless, and there is no light there now, no life, no love, no sacrifice. And lo! the tabernacle, the tabernacle which was our only consolation, our only earthly hope, the erstwhile residence of Him, the King of Kings, that little heaven where used to reign in all the majesty of His Eucharistic throne, our Eucharistic King, the Christ Himself, surrounded as He was by His myriad adoring angels—look, that too is cold and empty. He is no longer there. They have stolen Him from us. They have dragged our loved one away. They have crucified Him. They have nailed Him, brethren, nailed our Jesus, hand and foot to the bloody wood. They have killed Him. He is dead!

And so, to-night, the saddest night of all the year, yet be it said, and well for us 'tis so, a night so full of hope, we are here assembled to mourn anew the loss of one who was to us both friend and father—ah! yes, indeed, most kind, and tried and true, our own, our fond and loving Redeemer, the crucified Son of God.

Yes, to-night, in commemoration of that memorable Friday of the long ago, the Church of God throughout all Christendom, grief-stricken as she is, oppressed with many an untold sorrow and with gloom, beckons her children, of every race and clime, to approach and keep her company, while she stands weeping beside the bier of her dead Christ.

Friends, we, too, like all the rest, in order to act our little part of gratitude and love, have come to behold Him, the Holy of Holies, our merciful Redeemer, in the midst of insults and humiliations unspeakable—ignominies and torments unbearable, the half of which shall never be known till we appear before Him face to face on the last dread day of judgment.

To open this tragic scene, permit me to conduct you in spirit through the three great stages of our Saviour's Passion, in order that we might form some small idea, at least, of what He endured in the Garden of Olives, in the city of Jerusalem, and last of all, but by no

means least, on that sad and lonely mountain-top, called Calvary, that dismal place of execution where the Son of God completed His sacrifice of love, finished the tremendous work of atonement, and laid down His life for His flock.

Father McKenna then put in review the opening act of the tragedy, beginning with the supper room in Jerusalem. He described vividly the scenes of that Last Supper, the institution of the Eucharist, the tremors of the Apostles as they were told that one of them would betray the Lord and Master. The abject cringing of the loathsome Iscariot, on that memorable occasion—even with his crime half accomplished, was also dwelt upon. And the Master spoke not in anger, but in mercy. He was leaving to his disciples and their successors the last remembrance of Him upon earth. He was leaving them the Bread of Life to the end of time. He was oppressed by the weight of the world's sins, and he was about to die in atonement, but His every word was mercy and His last bequest was the Eucharist, the sacrament of transcendent love.

The preacher next touched upon the sad scenes in the Garden, where, overpowered with the weight of our transgressions, Jesus fell prostrate on the earth and in anguish of soul cried to the Father in Heaven to let the chalice pass from Him if it were possible. And in His agony He sweat blood. Meanwhile the disciples slept. For not one short hour could they watch and pray, not even after being partakers of the first Eucharist, Christ, the sinless, spotless one, loaded with the burden of our sins, prone on the earth in anguish, while traitorous feet circled around His Divine person ready to lay violent hands on Him, to insult, to jibe, to bind, to torture the Son of God. And still poor weak humanity slept. Still all was mercy, even to the unutterable renegade who polluted the sacred lips with a kiss of peace. Mercy to the soldier, whom Peter had smitten with his sword; mercy to Peter, who, in a few hours, would deny his Master to a maid servant; mercy to all; mercy universal.

Man's inhumanity, man's blood-thirstiness and man's cravenness were the lessons evolved from the scenes enacted in the so-called halls of justice in Jerusalem where Our Lord was submitted to the most fiendish persecution. In words of denunciation of those scenes, which rang throughout the sacred edifice, Father McKenna closed with a scathing impeachment of the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilatus had stultified himself; he admitted he could find no cause, but his time-serving heart would not let him set free the innocent Jesus; and this man thought he could wash his hands clean of the blood of the Christ.

The scene is again changed to Calvary's tragic heights. After dwelling upon the cruelties of the crucifixion—the clash of spears of the soldiers, the shouts of derision and cries of fury of the callous populace, Father McKenna, with a pathos that was tender and heart-clearing, pictured the two-fold lesson of filial and maternal affection which He on the gibbet and His Immaculate Mother at its foot gave to the world, and which has been the theme of historian, poet and preacher down through all the centuries. Then he proceeded to address a plea of supplication to his auditors to avail themselves of the opportunity afforded them to share in the bountiful graces of the day of resurrection, as follows:—

Behold Him dead upon the road, dead for love of souls, dead that we might never die. Oh, brethren, it is a terrible sight to look upon the cross and recall the price of our salvation. A God suffering, a God bleeding, a God groaning, a God dying, a God dead, and for what? For sin, and sin alone. Yes, God though he was, and sinless, yet it was sin alone that killed Him. Oh, sinner, what have you done? Behold the foul and bloody work of your murderous hands. Let your eye rest upon the cross and tell me, is not your soul stung with remorse at the sight of its dead victim. And you, you have caused it all. Yes, your sins have wrought that bloody crime. By your evil thought, your wicked words and deeds, you have thrust far deeper than did the soldier, your spear of ingratitude into His sacred heart. Oh! the pity of it all. You have murdered Him. He is dead. Oh! is there anyone present in your midst to-night whose soul is stained with the hideous stain of mortal sin? If so, let that poor soul for whom Jesus bled and Jesus died, go to the foot of the cross of his crucified God, where he will hear pronounced over him once again the message of love, of mercy, and forgiveness.

Remember that when groaning in the throes of death there dropped from His agonized lips in our behalf a fervent prayer for mercy and forgiveness. Yes, during His latest

dying moments He asked, He begged His Eternal Father's pardon for us, pardon for all. Hideous as may seem your sins, and great though the number be, for which He died, remember He will forgive you even now. He will save you, if in contrition you seek His cold and mangled feet, and there with Magdalen confess your crimes. Oh! sinners! sinners, if you are here to-night, and I am afraid you are, I speak for you alone, do not I beseech you, I implore you, I beg of you for the sake of your poor immortal soul, which shall soon appear before the terrible tribunal of Eternal Justice, do not in the name of Him who died for you trample under foot His precious blood. Remember that divine blood was shed for your salvation. There is no other stream that can cleanse you.

If there be a confessional left in the entire world, seek it. If there remain alive a single priest who is able to raise over you his hand to impart the God-given power of absolution, go to him, go in the name of the Crucified God, go and return love for love—go, and confess your sins, become rid of the burden that weighs you down, so that when the Sun of Easter morning shall appear in the Heavens, your souls may rise with the risen Christ, come forth from the grave of sin, and live on forever after throughout this earthly pilgrimage an uninterrupted life of grace, which by its glorious light and shining, will lead you straightway from your bed of death into the radiant and immortal presence of your Crucified King, into the eternal mansions of His Heavenly Jerusalem, up there where spring the all-merciful God, we shall all meet, and that ere long, to enjoy during the endless dawn of an eternal Easter morning the consummate bliss, the rapturous vision of His divine face forever more, forever more.

Grand Council C. M. B. A.

The Board of Trustees of the Grand Council of the C. M. B. A. of Canada held a session in this city this week, when important appointments in connection with the administration were made and routine business transacted.

The office of Grand Secretary made vacant by the death of the late Mr. R. S. Brown, was filled by the appointment of Mr. John A. Murphy, barrister of Cayuga, Ont. Mr. George V. McInerney, barrister of St. John, N.B., was elected to replace the late Mr. P. J. O'Keefe of that city on the Board.

Speaking to a member of the Board of Trustees, a "True Witness" representative learned that arrangements had been made for the organization of branches of the Association in British Columbia, and that great progress had been made recently in increasing the membership in the provinces down by the sea, and also in the eastern section of Ontario. Referring to our province, the "True Witness" was informed that the various branches had slightly increased their membership.

A Jesuit Painter.

The other day we read of the great Jesuit astronomer, who is on his way to South Africa to superintend the erection of an immense observatory there; every day we read of some special work being performed by some member of that Order. The latest is in connection with a great artistic work just completed by a Jesuit. The statement is to the effect that the faculty and students of St. John's College, at Fordham, N. Y., decided to have the ceiling of their chapel artistically decorated, and last Sunday they saw the work completed. It was done by Brother Francis C. Schroen, S.J. The report says:—

Brother Schroen is now forty-five years old, and has been a Jesuit for five years only. When it was announced six weeks ago that the chapel was in need of redecoration Brother Schroen asked permission to do the work. The ceiling of the chapel is 48 by 75 feet. Brother Schroen made, as the central piece on the ceiling, a painting 10 by 8 feet representing the "Baptism of Christ."

There is no doubt that it must be a work of great value. However, it is not surprising, for, like many other religious orders of the Church, the Jesuits have possessed men foremost in every human science and art. The Church, herself, has been the foster-mother of art and science throughout the ages.

Easter Sunday Decorations.

(By One Who Made the Mission.)

Bathed in floods of blessed sunshine, happy in the harmony of joyous sounds, beautified by nature's sweetest flowers, and elevated by the spirit of divine reverence, Easter has been among us for a day, and has passed into memory for a year. True, only a day. The time for rejoicing seems brief when we consider that the creation of the world occupied seven days and its redemption thirty-three years; but Sunday was the Day of the Fulfillment. The sable blackness, which had o'erwhelmed a wicked world after crucifying its Maker and Redeemer, was raised from the face of the earth. The internal convulsions, which had rocked mountains and rent the veil, were stilled. The last seismic tremor had passed away. The promise of the prophet had been fulfilled, and the work of redemption was completed. At Christ's birth glad tidings of great joy were proclaimed by angels; at His resurrection the glad tidings were carried from the sepulchre to the tomb by the disciples; by the holy women; for the new future had been opened to men, and men now rejoiced, decking the inward action of their souls with the outward and visible signs of great joy, so that all might know the source of their happiness.

The music of many bells broke clearly, the crisp morning air clarifying and giving distance to their tones, and the sounds of mourning were lost, but to the memory; the self-sacrifices of Lent were over; men tried to keep pace with nature, so the penitential garb was laid away and gave place to new habiliments; music of love and thanksgiving was audible everywhere; and visible everywhere were flowers that raised their heads in willing tribute, the simplicity of the lily vying with the modesty of the violet and the blushing of the rose.

At all the churches the floral decorations and lighting were in excellent harmony and good taste. In the former the factor predominant was the potted palm. They swayed gently and bowed their graceful leaves in harmony with the season when Christ and His Holy Church are all triumphant.

In keeping with the season in the floral decoration the prevailing tone was white: "Easter lilies are a story, set in white, of Jesus' love." The chaste and stately lily had fitting companions in the feathery spirea, the beautiful hydrangea and the generous azalea. In many Catholic churches there were large vases of cut flowers, which made the air redolent with their perfume, and in some the rose was much in evidence. In all the Catholic churches the lighting was paid much attention to, and the results were beautiful. At High Mass the altars burst forth into a blaze of light almost dazzling in its intensity, and it took no great effort of the imagination to recall what must have happened to the Roman soldiery when they were stricken and stunned as the great stone rolled away from the mouth of the tomb and Christ's glorified body passed in their vision for an instant.

AT ST. PATRICK'S.—The sanctuary and high altar in St. Patrick's Church were literally dazzling in their effulgence of light. From the communion rail to the foot of the altar were tastefully arranged myriad lamps intermingled with splendid specimens of the lily and the humbler spirea, while graceful palm-trees flanked the whole. The arrangement of the lights and flowers on the altar itself might be called a confection in decoration, so harmonious and pleasing to the eye was it. Those who looked after the beautifying of St. Patrick's have every reason to feel a pardonable pride in the result of their efforts.

AT THE GESU the decorations were of a most elaborate character, the sanctuary being filled with palms, lilies and spirea, while every niche and vacant space on the altar had its quota of white blooms, the outlines being brought out by borders of electric lights. Beside the permanent illuminants there were candleabra, holding a multitude of varicolored lamps. Then the half-concealed incandescents were very striking in their effects.

AT ST. ANN'S the adornment of the Church was of an elaborate nature. The statues of the two seraphim, kneeling just within the com-

munion rail were surrounded by lilies, palms, and spirea, while the intervals in the sanctuary were relieved by roses and heavy foliage plants. All the statues had votive offerings of cut flowers placed before them, and the altar was literally one blaze of light.

AT ST. GABRIEL CHURCH the decorations were very tasteful in their arrangement. They consisted chiefly of palms and lilies and fresh flowering plants were placed before the statues of Our Saviour and His Blessed Mother.

AT ST. ANTHONY'S the decorations were in the most tasteful style, and while not perhaps as profuse as in some of the other churches, lacked nothing in the way of beauty. There were the usual lilies and spirea, and a plenitude of cut blooms at the side altars and niches, which radiated a delicious perfume.

AT ST. BRIDGET'S, where Irish Catholics of the East End, pending the re-building of old St. Mary's, are worshipping, much taste was displayed in the decoration of the altars and the sanctuary. Gentle hands and kindly hearts, left in abundance striking evidence of their zeal in decorating God's House in this parish.

Czar Nicholas' Ukase.

(By a Regular Contributor.)

Not long since we had occasion to treat briefly the subject of the famous decree of "liberty of worship" recently issued by the Czar of Russia. We are perfectly willing to admit that we are at too great a distance from Russia to be able to fully or duly appreciate the meaning and effect of that exceptional ukase. But we know that, amongst other things, it means freedom of worship and of the practice of their religion for over twelve million of Catholics within the bounds of the Russian Empire. This is sufficient of a change, in itself, to warrant our desire to learn more regarding the inward workings of that vast national and political institution, and to be willing to grant to the ruler of Russia every merit which his acts have deserved. We know that for reasons of an international and political character a certain section of Europe, especially central Europe, has been only too glad to paint the Czar and his system of government, in hues that shock the more sensitive orbs of western civilization. We, therefore, take, with pleasure some extracts from a contribution, signed "Ex-Attache," which recently appeared in the New York "Tribune." We cannot vouch for the accuracy of this writer's statements; but on the face of it, the correspondence seems to bear the impress of sincerity and honesty.

We all know that Alexander III., the predecessor of the present Czar, had the reputation of being an intolerant tyrant. Yet his secretary was a Lutheran, and his bosom friend a Catholic priest. "Ex-Attache" tells us that "in an unfortunate moment, Alexander III. appointed his old tutor, Pobiedonosteff, to the post of Procurator-General of the Holy Synod, knowing him to be a man of the most sterling integrity, with the idea that he would, as the alter ego of the crown in ecclesiastical matters, inaugurate an era of greater discipline among the clergy, as well as introduce some urgently needed reforms. The Procurator-General, however, was a man imbued with a fanaticism in matters of religion that was totally out of keeping with the present age, and this, together with his deep rooted devotion to the Czar, led him not only to make use of his position to foster the doctrine among all classes of officialdom that orthodoxy was indispensable to loyalty, and that religious dissent spelled treason, but also to exert all his authority as perhaps the most influential member of the Council of Ministers and of the Senate of the Empire to persecute by administrative means all the non-orthodox subjects of the Czar into joining the established church. That constitutes the keynote of the era of tyranny which may be said to have prevailed during the reign of Alexander III., and in a milder form until recently, a tyranny the existence of which it is impossible to deny, since it led to the expatriation not merely of hundreds of thousands but even of millions of subjects of the Russian crown who declined to join the orthodox church, and which resulted in the banishment of many hundreds of Roman Catholic clergy, and even some bishops, to Siberia, as well as in the closing of some of the most

famous and useful universities and seats of learning in the dominions of the autocrat."

Thus we see what evil can be wrought by one man, especially if that man is out of touch with the spirit of the age. The writer thus continues:—

"Emperor Nicholas, however, is a man of broader views and of more progressive mind than was his father. He has enjoyed the advantages of more extensive foreign travel than had ever fallen to the lot of his predecessor on the throne, and being an omnivorous reader, has been able to keep himself abreast of and in touch with foreign ideas and with the spirit of the age. While fully appreciating the integrity and the devotion of M. Pobiedonosteff, he entertained but little of Alexander III.'s sympathy and affection for the man, and after repeatedly remonstrating with him as he has at length asked for and received his resignation. And, in order that there shall be no mistake, either at home or abroad, about his complete disapproval of the Procurator-General's policy, he has issued this decree in which, after having called attention to the principles of religious tolerance laid down by the fundamental laws of the Russian Empire, that is to say, the laws established by Peter the Great and by Catherine the Great, he demands 'unwavering observance' thereof, and the assurance 'to all our subjects of other religions (than the orthodox church), and to all foreign persuasions, freedom of creed and of worship in accordance with their respective rights.' This means that the 12,000,000 Roman Catholics, the 7,000,000 Protestants, the 4,000,000 Jews and the 12,000,000 or more dissenters of one kind and another in the European moiety of Russia will be free to practise their religion without let or hindrance, and will be no longer persecuted and treated as disloyal and as rebels merely because they refuse to join the orthodox church and to regard the Czar not alone as their temporal ruler, but as their ecclesiastical Pontifex Maximus."

Referring to the personal disposition and character of Nicholas, and to the probability of the permanency of the reform inaugurated by him, the writer says:—

"That Nicholas should have selected precisely his father's birthday for the issue of this decree may be taken to mean that he wished to bear a public tribute to the fact that his father, contrary to popular belief both at home and abroad, was the most tolerant of men in matters of religion. He wished, in one word, to dissociate Alexander III. from all the religious persecutions carried on in his name, and usually without his knowledge or consent, and, in one word, to identify his predecessor on the throne in the minds of the people with one of the most notable ukases that has ever been promulgated by any Autocrat of All the Russias since the days of Peter the Great. It may also be taken to imply that the decree has the approval of his mother, the widowed Czarina, who, at any rate, as long as Nicholas remains without a son to inherit his crown, remains a power in the land—a power that has until now been regarded as reactionary by reason of the circumstance that, passionately devoted to the memory of her late husband, she is believed to regard any departure from his policy as impious."

One more passage regarding the Parliamentary system of Russia—if we may so call it—is of great importance, and casts a vivid light upon the situation. He says:—

"There are the contional, or district, assemblies, also elected, and the Provincial Council, or zemstvos, in which 64 per cent. of the votes belong to the peasantry, 12 per cent to the nobility, 4 per cent. to the artisans, 5 per cent. to the clergy, and 10 per cent. to the merchants. All these various local parliaments are constituted by means of popular elections, and the zemstvos, which have a very large voice in the administration of justice and in the right to levy rates and taxes, have, indeed, infinitely more power than the departmental councils general in France. In one word, Russia enjoys a far greater amount of self-government than foreigners imagine. Only it is local, and it is not national in the sense that there is no Imperial Parliament at St. Petersburg, in which the people are represented and are able to check and directly control the administration of the Imperial Government. Russia, in one word, has local self-government throughout the empire, subject, not to a national legislature, but to Nicholas II., the most humane, well meaning and enlightened of European sovereigns, one who thoroughly realizes the fact that the constitutional development of his people must be gradual, since they only divested themselves of Orientalism two centuries ago."

Shamrock

ANNUAL MEETING.—Present our readers with the directors and statements which will be to the annual meeting of the Amateur Athletic Club to be held in the Young L. and B. hall, on Monday next.

The past year has been,

The report to be read is

REPORT

To the Members of the

Gentlemen:—A decade of your Association, and sending you with a summary of the term just closed, enthusiastic and practical tested in all matters con-

The financial position—placed on a more solid foundation reduced from \$20,711. This result cannot be other than a credit to the committee during the term now resting on the central liquidated.

The success attained by exceeded that of previous Club which, in addition to associated, has been, as in your funds.

The hockey section did the league championship; in pointed as they realized the sequel upon the retirement team of two years ago, was and enthusiastic work. The tion of securing players who been demonstrated during t-

In the football department years ago there was a lack said on the subject. There achieve the same measure of lacrosse and hockey. You year will behold a greater successors in office to put in our organization.

The Young Shamrock I the report of its secretary t amongst affiliated clubs sho were unavoidable.

There was a slight incre but your directors have no h greater influx of members c tion with membership ticket introduce one new member t eing. If such were done the your directors in establishing which, they, and their prede

The annual repairs to th been made at a reasonable c

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Shewing Revenue and April 1st, 1902, a

Membership Fees Rental of Ground Shamrock Lacrosse Club Shamrock Hockey Club

Interest on Mortgage Debt and Insurance Fuel and Light Repairs, Grand Stand, Fences School and other Taxes Telephone Service Wages Fees C.A.A.A. and expenses of Printing and Stationery Lawn Mower and Repairing of Plumbing Sundries

DEBITS AND

Deficit Football Deficit Young Shamrock Surplus Earnings for year