

the day—he said sweetly and simply “that there was no need to thank people when they first intruded upon one’s rights and afterwards agreed to let up.” It was decided not to forward the copy to the Archbishop. The parsons then proceeded to vote down a motion to admit newspaper men to their future meetings.

A sure sign of summer’s close approach has arrived in the person of the old ice cream vendor who since 1868 has stood daily throughout the season upon the St. James Street side of Victoria Square. He is as well known, this burly old Frenchman, as our cherished Nelson monument, or the Seminary clock or the old church of Bonsecours, but he is much less changed than the latter; alas, and alas! One warm afternoon of last week I stopped to speak with the poor old man. “Don’t look at my cart,” he said, “for it’s had a misfortune,” and with grave sorrow he showed me his itinerant shop in all the bravery of a new coat of scarlet paint. One side had ICE CREAM very nicely stencilled upon it, in golden letters, but upon the other the sign read, MAERC ECI! The artist had allowed his mind to wander from his work, and the stencilling read “as in a looking-glass.” “We have all our troubles,” said he, philosophically.

First Communion is the order of the day just now, and in all sorts of weather, upon all sorts of streets, one meets little feminine fairies in floating garments of white, with veiled heads, and grave boys, resplendent in new “Sunday suits,” their arms decorated with the due amount of white ribbon. It is the custom for the pupils of St. Mary’s College to make their First Communion in the Jesuit’s Church, and this year the day chosen was Ascension Thursday. The brother Sacristan had spared nothing in the matter of decoration, and the sanctuary presented a very beautiful appearance. The high altar was blazing with light and gay with natural flowers; choice pots of bloom stood about among the adoring angels and the great candlesticks of gold; the benches usually occupied by the choir boys were turned so as to face the altar, and the doors of the sanctuary were thrown open.

In the chapel of the Blessed Virgin, the Altar of Our Lady of Liesse glowed with rosy light, as indeed it does every morning during this month of May. A few moments before seven the school, numbering over three hundred boys, trooped in, the choir under Father Cotter taking their places around the small organ. At seven to the moment, the eighteen First Communicants entered the church, and filed into the sanctuary, where each boy’s delicately decorated taper was taken from him to be placed upon the golden candelabra which stood by the entrance doors. Then came the prefect of the college, Rev. Father Schmidt, who began the mass, served by two boys dressed in the pretty uniform of the school. At the Communion the eighteen little lads, two by two, knelt on the lowest step of the altar to receive the Blessed Eucharist. It was a pretty sight to see them there—admitted for the first time to that holy spot—one could not help thinking that perhaps some of those who were so carefully watching over them, may have in the same place, on a similar occasion, in years long gone by, received the grace which obtained for them the privilege of dwelling for ever in the sanctuary of the Lord God of Hosts.

The Sacrament of confirmation was administered shortly before ten o’clock by His Grace the Archbishop. The young candidates were placed along the step of the communion railing, each entering the sanctuary in his turn to kneel before the throne where the first Archbishop of Montreal sat under the canopy of the last king of France. His Grace then pontificated, assisted by the Rev. Fathers Beaudevin and Renaud, S. J., as deacons of honour and Rev. Father La Rue, S. J., and Rev. Mr. Roux as deacon and sub-deacon of office. At the conclusion of mass His Grace imparted to all present the Papal Benediction—which he is empowered to bestow but four times in the year, so that it was a highly prized mark of distinction for the First Communion at the Gesteu.

In the afternoon, vespers were sung by Rev. Father Desjardines, S. J., at three o’clock, after which a sermon to the boys was preached by Rev. Father Caisse, S. J., who explained to them the nature of the vows they were about to renew.

The choicest flowers of the morning’s decoration had been transferred to the Blessed Virgin’s altar, before which the eighteen waxen tapers in the golden candlesticks slowly burned

away. Between them, over the communion railing, hung a scarlet cloth, behind which on a little table was placed the Book of the Gospels. At the close of the sermon each of the boys in turn, walking up to this table, laid his hand upon the Holy Book and solemnly renewed the promises of his baptism. One could not but be impressed with the exquisite perfection of every detail of the day’s ceremonies. All was so dainty, so harmonious—and then the loving care shown to the boys—certainly if they go wrong in after years it will not be by reason of any lack of attention and prayerful counsel on the part of their reverend masters.

OLD MORTALITY.

THE RESCUE OF THE MADONNA.

BY PADRE COLOMA.

And in their feats they were great for doing them, little for telling them.—*de Mariana.*

III.

During the evening Alexander visited the quarters, animating the soldiers, comforting the wounded, and distributing among them plentiful aid, with that liberality and graciousness which he seemed to have inherited from his predecessor, his uncle and beloved friend, Don Juan of Austria. In a corner of the quarters of the Spanish Tercios, the soldiers had placed the statue of the Madonna, rescued by Mirabal, on a gun carriage covered with a flag won the same day from the heretics. Alexander asked its meaning, and they related the ensign’s feat—he was there present—and the scene between him and Father Juan Fernandez the evening before.

“Bring hither yon lance,” said the Duke to a page who was walking behind a knight, carrying a short lance whose gilt point appearing from its silken covering was at that time the insignia of the captains of the Spanish infantry. He himself handed it to the ensign, and added:—

“Take it, Senor Alvar de Mirabal. He well deserves the command of a company who undertakes such an enterprise.”

Alexander then asked for Father Juan Fernandez, but he was not to be found. All had seen him during the assault, hastening to places of the greatest danger along with the other missionaries, to drag away the wounded and give aid to the dying. They had seen him later on in the great tent set up in the middle of the camp for the help of the wounded; he was still occupied in his task. Since then no one had seen him. Only an old soldier said that, half an hour before, the Jesuit had questioned him minutely on the position of the fosses before the gate of the Bourg, where so many of the wounded had remained abandoned without help of any kind. Then he had seen him going into his tent with cries of grief and dismay.

“See him! see him! There he goes!” all at once shouted several voices.

Those who were higher up could see Father Juan Fernandez, passing beyond the intrenchments of the camp. Alone, calmly and without fear, and without other arms than a crucifix hanging from his neck, he was directing his steps towards the fosse of the gate of the Bourg. The heretics also saw him from the wall, and discharged a piece of their ordnance at him. But the Jesuit went forward fearlessly, without hastening or slackening the speed of his steps. The heretics shouted with rage, and the Catholics held their breath as they saw him march on, for they had divined his heroic design. As he came to the fosse, there was a discharge of musketry, and the Jesuit fell lifeless on the edge and rolled over to the bottom, remaining motionless on a heap of the dead.

Little by little the shades of night spread darkness over that field of desolation, and then it might have been seen that the slender body of the Jesuit had not been abandoned by the heroic soul which animated it. He cautiously raised his head from the heap of corpses on which it was pillowed, and listened attentively to hear if along the edge of the fosse there was any noise from the heretics. Nothing could be heard. Then he quickly seated himself, and stretched out his limbs, swollen from the long hour he had remained motionless, feigning to be dead in order to escape the fire of the heretics. He began at once removing little by little the cold corpses, saying in a low voice: