

THE STATUE QUESTION.

SERMON BY REV. FATHER CALLAGHAN IN ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH, MONTREAL.

At the ten o'clock Mass which was celebrated on Sunday last in St. Patrick's church, Montreal, all the pews were filled to their utmost capacity and no standing room in the aisles was seen unoccupied. The Rev. Martin Callaghan ascended the pulpit and preached from the Gospel according to St. John. He explained the nature of sanctifying grace and enlarged upon the effects which it produces. At a certain stage of his sermon he remarked: "In this connection I am perhaps expected to say something in reference to a subject which is considerably exercising the public mind and calculated, in the designs of Providence, to elicit much good by promoting the cause of Catholicity. There has been a project formed of erecting a statue of the Blessed Virgin upon Mount Royal park. Is it advisable that this project should be realized? It might be somewhat presumptuous on my part to pronounce upon this matter, but, waiving the question of advisability, I might ask whether the erection of such a statue would be unjustifiable on principle. Not a few persons assert that it would be unjustifiable, and in making this assertion they exhibit an almost incredible amount of the crudest ignorance and the most glaring inconsistency and the intensest bigotry. We are living in the nineteenth century—a century which boasts of its enlightenment and of the manifold wonders which it has achieved. One would imagine that at least the people of nowadays should neither speak nor write but of what they know—should never affirm but what they can prove. Such, however, is not the case when there is a question of the Catholic Church. She is the victim of misrepresentation and ill-treatment. Her claims and teachings are shamefully ignored and disregarded. She is held responsible for odious facts of history in which she was not implicated, and for daily crimes with which she is not officially connected. She is charged with doctrines which she indignantly repudiates. When Christ was dying upon the Cross, He implored His Father to pardon His executioners: "Forgive them; they know not what they do." His faithful and impartial spouse, cognizant of the slanders which are heaped forth on all sides to the prejudice of the original and ever-loving Mother of our Divine Redeemer fervently pray that God will forgive her legion of vile detractors, because they know not what they say. We are generally reputed to divine her, but we do nothing of the kind. We are accused of worshipping statues and investing them with a virtue which they do not possess. The accusation is devoid of all foundation. We are neither idolaters nor superstitiously inclined. Our church has never inculcated, sanctioned or tolerated anything that might savor of idolatry or superstition. To her discredit and disadvantage, the 8th Commandment is violated, repeatedly and unblushingly. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." A certain cleric, adorning himself with the title of Bishop, is advertised to establish a fact which nobody will dispute. He is prepared to prove with overwhelming evidence that Christ never intended that His Mother should be worshipped. All Catholics join with Protestants in holding that he never had such an intention. The rev. gentleman would act more wisely to change his programme, and regale his hearers with a few chapters of Butler's short catechism, which costs but a few cents, and will furnish the most invaluable information. He would then do some good, or at least escape from a heavy expenditure of useless energy. He should be advised to desist from entertaining his audience with hackneyed objections that have been triumphantly answered a myriad of times. Protestants in their attitude towards the Blessed Virgin are glaringly inconsistent. They are quite satisfied to call a street of this city by a name which we give her, and in honoring her by this name they are honoring her. I allude to Notre Dame street, or the street of Our Lady. Yet they are supremely dissatisfied and enraged at the idea that we should honor her in another way—by means of a statue. They dedicate their churches to our saints. After an experience of three hundred years they have not yet any of their own. Protestantism has not given birth to a single saint and is nowise scrupulous in pilfering from our calendar whatever saints they fancy and would like to adopt. They dedicate their churches to these saints, they honor them, though they may not intend to do so. How strange a statue one who surpasses all the saints in holiness. A person who enjoyed the plenitude of grace and in whose heart the Lord resided in a most special manner. Protestants pretend that they follow the Bible, but they are far from following it. They follow it when it suits them, or rather it is themselves they follow. They act in open contradiction to this divine book inspired. According to the Bible they should be like the Archangel Gabriel, who, in the hour of trial, was loyal to the Most High and delivered the message with which he was entrusted in accents of the most respectful affection. Saluting Mary, he exclaimed: "Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women." They will not be like this celestial ambassador, but would prefer to resemble the unfaithful and fallen angel spoken of in Genesis and to whom God said: "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head." In accordance with Holy Writ they should imitate Elizabeth, the spouse of Zechariah. How proud and delighted she felt in receiving a visit from her cousin, the Blessed Virgin—"Whence is this to me that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." Protestants would rather make common

cause with the inhabitants of Bethlehem who would not admit the future mother of our adorable Redeemer into their hotels, but obliged her to seek shelter outside of their town in cold and utterly wretched stable. Our divine Lord is ineffably admirable in the dispositions which He manifested towards the Blessed Virgin. He selected her to be come His Mother from among all the daughters of Eve, and qualified her in an eminent manner so that she might become a worthy Mother for Himself. He dwelt nine months in her virginal womb, and spent in Nazareth at her side, under the same roof, thirty years of the thirty-three which He lived upon earth. At her chaste suggestion He performed the miracle of Cana by changing water into wine, and though He intimately realized all that He suffered on Calvary, still He could not forget His devoted Mother, who stood at the foot of His Cross, and committed her to the care of the Apostle whom He loved in a singular manner, who reposed His head upon His sacred breast, and desired to be styled the Virgin Apostle. Christians should have the same disposition Christ had. "Have," says St. Paul to the Philippians "the same mind in yourselves which also was in Christ Jesus." Protestants are not Christians but everything else. Are they disposed towards the Blessed Virgin as He was? By no means. His august mother is a sheer nobody in their eyes. She appears something worse. She is an object of indifference and contempt. They should be like the Holy Ghost who co-operated with the Blessed Virgin in the mystery of the Incarnation. Her own Son was "conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary." Not only did the third person of the Blessed Trinity consider her worthy of the sublime alliance which He contracted, but He also declared His formal intentions that throughout all times and places she should be elevated upon the loftiest pinnacle of grandeur and upon the costliest pedestal of glory to which any pure creature could aspire. "From henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." Where are these generations to be found? It is in the bosom of Protestantism? With a few honorable exceptions, Protestants deem the Blessed Virgin unworthy of their regard or slightest attention. If they could manage it, they would banish her forever from the minds and hearts of all men. Ministers are afraid to mention her name or make it familiar to the ears of their congregations. They will debate with elaborate skill upon the Biblical personages whom they admire, but never will they venture to extol in their sermons the qualities which distinguished the Mother of our Divine Lord. At times Protestants lose all self control and flounce only as raving maniacs in the hatred which they bear her. The epithet which they refuse her has been always dear to Catholics. Only within the pale of our Church have generations existed that always called her "Blessed." Our pedigree is what is noblest and most enviable upon earth. We descend from those Christians who sang the praises of Mary in the crypts of the catacombs. We belong to a family that prides in all that has been most learned and saintly in by-gone ages. The most illustrious scholars and the greatest saints were children of the Catholic Church and our ancestors. All these scholars and all these saints loved to pay the sincerest homage to the Mother of Christ. By faith we claim a relationship with Columbus, who discovered this magnificent continent of ours—who sailed in a ship called Santa Maria and styled the second island upon which he set foot Mary of the Conception; with Father Marquette, who named the Mississippi, which he discovered in his missionary travels, "The Immaculate Conception." 380 years before the dogmas was solemnly defined; with the first colonists of Canada, who founded this prosperous and peaceful city which we inhabit, and called it Ville Marie, or City of Mary.

It cannot be, therefore, unjustifiable on principle to erect a statue to the Blessed Virgin, and if it were erected it would serve as a triple monument—a monument of respect, a monument of gratitude, and a monument of edification. Mary should be respected. She is entitled to a special degree of sanctity on account of the dignity of the divine maternity with which she is endowed. What greater dignity can be conceived or bestowed upon an simple created being? Now, if we should respect the Blessed Virgin we should manifest our respect, otherwise it would be only a mockery. One of the best forms which this respect can assume is unquestionably the form of a statue. We should be grateful to the Blessed Virgin. What would we be without her, and how without her could we hope for heaven? She has given us our Redeemer. Had she liked it, she need not have become His mother. If she did become His mother it was by an act of her own deliberate choice; it was because she freely consented. She is the Benefactress of the human race. Now, if the world shows its gratitude to those who have rendered it any eminent service by erecting statues for the purpose of commemorating them—if it perpetuates in bronze, in stone or marble its poets, orators, warriors, philosophers, statesmen and patriots, why should not all Christians, why should not all men, rejoice at the thought of erecting a statue to the Mother of our Divine Redeemer—to the privileged individual to whom, after Christ, we are indebted for the degree of civilization modern society is enjoying, for all the spiritual blessings we partake of in this life and for all the prospects which await us beyond the grave in the region of everlasting bliss. A statue to the Blessed Virgin would remind us of virtues which we will always require—which would embellish every family circle and render life meritorious. Mary excelled in every virtue. We cannot meditate too often upon her humility, charity, purity. We should be imbued with her spirit of prayer and generosity. If a statue were erected in her honor it would accomplish an incalculable amount of good. Should such an erection not take place, let us at least engrave her features in ourselves; let us constantly keep her as a model before our minds, and let us be living

copies of this Virgin Mother of the incarnate Son of God—our loving and adorable Redeemer. Should the opportunity present itself let us raise to her honor a statue which will prove a worthy expression of the deepest respect, deepest gratitude and the most undying affection. It is in America that she should be honored, and in every form that can be devised. With the highly gifted American poet, Longfellow, well may we say:

"This is the Blessed Mary's land,
Virgin and Mother of our dear Redeemer.
All hearts are touched and softened at her name.
Alike, the bandit with the bloody hand,
The priest, the prince, the scholar and the peasant.
The man of deeds, the visionary dreamer,
Pay homage to her as one ever present.
And if our faith has given us nothing more
Than this example of all womanhood,
So mild, so merciful, so strong, so good,
So patient, peaceful, loyal, loving, pure,
This were enough to prove it higher and truer
Than all the creeds the world had known before."
—Daily Post, April 23.

Written for the CATHOLIC RECORD.
VERY REV. C. LEFEBVRE, C. S. C.

THE EDUCATIONAL APOSTLE OF THE ACADIAN—SKETCH OF A NOBLE AND SUCCESSFUL CAREER.

Among the data respecting living Canadian public men, given in the *Dominion Annual Register*, for 1886, we find the following:—

"Rev. C. Lefebvre, born at St. Philippe, P. Q., February 14th, 1831; ordained priest, 1856; Founder of St. Joseph's College, Memramook, N. B., 1864; Apostolic missionary, ad interim 1873; Provincial of Congregation of Holy Cross for the Dominion, 1871-79; President St. Joseph's College and Pastor of Memramook, since 1864."

To no ecclesiastical of the Maritime Provinces can the application, a great man, be more fittingly applied than to the subject of the preceding notice. Few among the clergy of that portion of Canada are more widely known or more deservedly esteemed; fewer still have, in the space of a quarter of a century, accomplished more for the glory of God, and the good of society; none will bequeath to posterity more enduring monuments, or more spotless fame.

HIS YOUTH.

The son of an estimable and prosperous Canadian farmer, Camille Lefebvre attended during his early boyhood the village school of St. Philippe, P. Q. The exceptional cleverness manifested by the lad prompted his father to give him the benefit of a liberal education; and he was accordingly sent to the Sulpician College at Montreal, to begin his classical studies. A high spirit, genial, sympathetic youth, he won popularity on the playground; while his industry, talents, and untiring respect for authority secured for him the commendations of his superiors. The last two years of his course were spent at St. Laurent College, near Montreal. That institution was then, as now, conducted by the Fathers of Holy Cross, a Congregation founded in France in 1793, and established in Canada about the middle of the present century. While at St. Laurent's, young Lefebvre gave such evidences of solid piety, and displayed so strong a predilection for the religious life, that it was a surprise to nobody when, on the completion of his course, in 1852, he entered the Holy Cross Novitiate. He was the first ecclesiastical recruit to join the ranks of the congregation in Canada.

FIRST YEARS IN THE PRIESTHOOD.

Ordained Priest in 1856, the young religious for some years devoted himself, at the call of obedience, to various labors in his native province. He was connected successively with St. Laurent College, and the Holy Cross Academy at St. Anne, P. Q., and for five years was curate of the parish of St. Eustache. His immediate superior in this last position was the late Rev. J. Gastineau, one of the most distinguished theologians of Canada. To his daily intercourse at this period with so erudite a pastor, Father Lefebvre probably owes much of his theological acumen, as well as much of his skill in the practical direction of souls. During this same period, the curate began to be remarked as an orator of more than ordinary ability. In fact, his efficiency in the pulpit was so great that he was appointed to give "missions" throughout the important diocese of St. Hyacinthe, a task which he prosecuted with energetic zeal and one in which he proved eminently successful. He had not begun his life-work. Emphatically a man with a mission, Providence had not yet disclosed the field wherein that mission lay. Thus far in his sacerdotal career, he had been merely serving an apprenticeship. Even as, in feudal times, youthful squire spent years in practicing the exercises of chivalry—defly crossed their fells, caracolled their prancing steeds, or with lances couched rode furiously down the lists in the mimic war of the tournament; so did this aspirant to earth's grandest knight-hood essay the labors that were to fill his life in the glorious crusade for which he was destined. At length, nine years after his ordination, the apprentice was finished, the squire had won his spurs, and the knight began his mission.

HIS FIELD OF LABOR.

As a college in its twenty-fourth year has scarcely got beyond the stage of infancy, it would not be surprising if St. Joseph's had not as yet effected any marked improvement in the condition of the people in whose interests, principally, it was founded. What is surprising is the fact that, in so short a period, education could have wrought so extraordinary a change as has been brought about among the Acadians. Never did drought-stricken soil drink the copious showers of the heavens more eagerly than Acadia imbibed the waters of knowledge; and seldom has such a soil blossomed into luxuriant fertility more suddenly than is Acadia becoming metamorphosed. Numbering more than a hundred thousand in the maritime provinces, the Acadians are to-

day represented, and ably so, in the Senate, the Commons, and the Provincial Legislatures. Their political leaders display sound statesmanship, and their political influence, powerful in many constituencies, is, in several, overwhelming. Their priests, lawyers and doctors suffer nothing from comparison with those of other nationalities. They have three journals published in their language, all edited with ability, and all zealous advocates of Acadian interests. Their business men are enterprising and prosperous; their mechanics, farmers and fishermen, clever, intelligent and wide-awake. Their teachers, already numbering hundreds and daily increasing, receive excellent training, and the attendance in the district schools is gratifyingly large. Much, of course, still remains to be done, but unmistakable evidence has already been given that Acadia has shaken off the torpor which for generations benumbed her intellect, and that, under equal conditions, the heirs of 1755 can readily keep pace with their neighbors, whether of English, Scotch or Irish descent. While it might savor of exaggeration to attribute this rapid social advancement, directly or indirectly, to a single institution or individual, it is certain that no one agency has been so powerful in producing this result as St. Joseph's College, and that no one man can, with so much justice as Father Lefebvre, exclaim, "pars magna fuit."

Nor has it been simply as founder and president of the college at Memramook that the subject of our sketch has contributed to the welfare of this people of his love. An orator of singular power, he has traversed Acadia from Madawaska to Cape Breton, preaching missions, retreats, jubilees, etc.; and while exhorting on spiritual matters the crowds who have thronged to hear him, has never failed to urge upon them the adoption of those means which have conduced to their social and material progress.

An earnest advocate of colonization, he strongly dissuades the young men from emigrating, as some of them are fond of doing, to the neighboring republic. He constantly urges them rather to settle on the Crown lands of the Province; and by a few years' exertions, secure for themselves a permanent independence.

In his own parish of Memramook, he has done much towards introducing improved methods of agriculture. He largely superintends the extensive farm pertaining to the college, and there reduces to practice the theories discussed with his parishioners in agricultural assemblies. A spirit of emulation has been excited which has been productive of excellent results.

AS PASTOR.

Father Lefebvre has made of Memramook a model parish, and a flourishing one. St. Thomas' church ranks, among Catholic churches in New Brunswick, second only to the St. John Cathedral. It is a spacious stone edifice, the body of which was built prior to 1864. A few years ago, a magnificent front, erected at a cost of nine thousand dollars, materially enhanced the architectural beauty of the exterior; while still more recently the interior has been handsomely painted throughout. A fine peal of bells, an eighteen hundred dollar organ, rich altars, elegant vestments, costly vestments and altar ornaments, everything in fact that can contribute to the imposing solemnity and grandeur of divine worship, is to be found in this country church. These externals are but the fitting indexes of the spirit of practical faith and earnest piety that animates the parishioners. Religious confraternities, associations, etc., abound; society, "The Ladies of St. Ann," possess an elegant and completely furnished chapel of their own. Not only is the attendance at Sunday services invariably large; but daily mass and the extraordinary services, during lent, novenas, the Forty Hours, Month of the Holy Rosary, and such like devotions draw together large and fervent congregations. The sacraments are frequented with regularity; mixed marriages with a practically unknown evil; and the head and reciting the angelus, no matter where one may be when the bell rings, or saluting the Blessed Sacrament when passing the church, are universal.

To say that Father Lefebvre is loved and loved by his parishioners is to convey but a slight idea of the wealth of affection and reverence to which, at will, he has access; and with which, when fitting opportunities occur, he is spontaneously overwhelmed. Such an occasion presented itself on the 14th of February last, his birthday; and assuredly no pastor could desire a grander recognition of his labors than that which he then received from his devoted flock. The congratulatory addresses, in French and English, which accompanied the presentation of a handsome gift, breathed a truthfulness unmistakable, investing the sentiments expressed with a genuineness quite foreign to the matter of course compliments usual on such occasions. Memramook appear to better advantage than in his response to those addresses. Physically and mentally gifted with all the advantages that can contribute to the external graces of a speaker, he possesses in addition the sympathy, vivaciousness, and fervor that make speech truly eloquent. Somewhat above the medium height, and of a rather portly build, his exterior is dignified and imposing. His physiognomy, indicative of high and vigorous intellectual powers, bears in general contour and in several specific features, a striking resemblance to that of Hon. Ed. Blake. A rich, round voice that can run at will the gamut of all the passions, gesture always graceful and comely, vocabulary which secures elegant and forcible diction, an exuberant fancy regulated by a judgment always clear, such are some of the qualities that have won for the pastor of Memramook high rank among the pulpit orators of the Province.

Fifty-seven in February last, he is still in his prime, and shows but few traces of the hardships encountered during thirty-three arduous years of sacerdotal and educational labor. His sanguine temperament has enabled him to sur-

vive reverses that would have prostrated many; and there appears to be no reason why he should not continue, for several decades yet, to do the Lord's work in his chosen field.

But come his summons soon or late, a nation's sobb will chant his requiem, and on the living monument of a people's heart, his name will live as the best-beloved of the Acadian race.

A PREACHER OF PATIENCE.

MR. PARNELL ON THE OUTLOOK FOR IRELAND.

New York, April 26.—The *Times* London correspondent had an interview last evening with Mr. Parnell. The correspondent said:—"Mr. Parnell, what view do you take of the claim that even the Queen's Law ought to be obeyed under all circumstances?" The Irish leader replied:—"While usually holding it to be especially necessary at this time that the Irish people be most circumspect in avoiding the commission of any illegality, I consider that so far as regard actions which are newly constituted offences by the coercion measure of last session, such as the maintenance of the organization of the National League in proclaimed districts, the assertion of the rights of freedom of public meeting, liberty of speech and freedom of the press in proclaimed districts, all of which are struck at by the Crimes Act, I say that the Irish people are absolutely bound to REFUSE TO OBEY SUCH AN INIQUITOUS LAW."

And to deny that it has any moral sanction. Their struggle to assert these rights has my entire sympathy. I consider that they are carrying it on most bravely. I believe that the names of the men—many of them in humble positions—who are cheerfully facing a plank bed and the rigors of penal imprisonment in defence of their principles will worthily live in the history of our country." As to the prospects of some immediate change Mr. Parnell is not sanguine. He said:—"From all the indications afforded by the bye-elections, it is evident that at the next general election those electors who abstained from voting in 1886, and thereby returned the Tory Government with a hundred majority, will in the main vote to restore Mr. Gladstone to power with about a similar majority. It cannot be too clearly understood that it was the ABSTENTION OF LIBERAL VOTERS throughout Great Britain which did the mischief. But as to when the opportunity of a general election will come is a question. The time is only just approaching in which it will be possible to test the cohesion of the Liberal Unionists to their Tory allies. The Government are rather prematurely planning themselves on the unopposed second reading of the Local Government Bill. This measure depends on a multitude of details, and the battleground of these will be committees. In that stage at any moment a question may arise which will really strain the solidarity of the Unionist coalition. Many important interests are assailed. The Tory county party view with distrust and dislike the whole measure, and are sure to show this by a bad attendance on committees. But whether or not we succeed in this year over the Local Government Bill or some other question, it must be remembered that the final result of the restoration of a Parliament to Ireland is assured beyond a doubt. For an event of such magnitude, which, up to 1885 was certainly not expected, save as the doubtful outcome of years of struggle and suffering, but which has now become the certain prospect of a year or two, we can surely afford to have a little patience. To the American people especially, without whose aid we could have made none of this enormous advance, and who, looking from a distance, may be disposed to regard the present progress as slow when compared with the stride taken in 1885, I would say that what we have to do at present is to use this interval to CONSOLIDATE AND SECURE OUR GROUND for the next step when the time to take it arrives with every confidence that it will be the final and crowning one. Although the pause may seem to be long, it is essential and valuable. It is as nothing compared with the many centuries that Ireland has waited in hopeless misery and sacrifice. We must learn to know how to wait as well as how to advance. The most victorious armies of history have been compelled at times to rest in seeming inactivity behind their trenches, and it is just as necessary for a nation if it desires freedom to learn how to do this at the proper time in patience as it is for an army. I have said a period of waiting was an advantage to us. It is educating and will educate the people of Great Britain. Men who in 1885 followed Mr. Gladstone in his great measure from belief in the man, now follow him as well from BELIEF IN THE CAUSE.

There are thousands of Liberals throughout the country who at that time were without sufficient information to enable them to defend Mr. Gladstone's policy, and who are now as ardent Home Rulers and as capable exponents of the necessity of such a measure for Ireland as any of the Irish members themselves. In Ulster, too, this improvement is notable. I believe from all I hear that if an election were to take place we should make a net gain of three members there. If the Ulster Presbyterians once become convinced that they will not get land reform without Home Rule they will become Home Rulers, and the present Government, most stupidly, I think, is doing all it can to compel this conviction. Caruchill's speech this afternoon on the Irish County Councils Bill was one of the most important of the session and certainly the ablest he has ever delivered on any subject. His disclosure of the views held by Salisbury's Cabinet in 1886 was of the first magnitude in importance, diametrically opposed as they are to the views announced by Balfour in the debate today. His foreboding of grave disaster to the Tory party at the polls if a general election, perhaps close at hand, arrived, produced a tremendous sensation and seemed most ominous. In fact the speech was undoubtedly the hardest blow the Government has yet received, and it will have far-reaching results in the country. These results, towards which events are shaping, must be in our favor.