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# The Catholic Register

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## TOPICS OF AN OLD-TIMER

The Elmsley Controversy and some of the Mem Who Took Part in it—The Very Rev. W. P. Macdonald, Vicar-General of Kingston and Hamilton—Right Rev. Bishop Strachan, First Protestant Bishop of Toronto—An Outline of Their Lives and Labors—Scotchmen Both.

The controversy over Captain Elmsley's conversion as narrated in my last, was for a time warm and irritating, and for several years a matter of discussion. Many Protestants were of the belief that the captain was out of his mind and were in the habit of expressing themselves when told that he was a gentleman of intelligence and sincerity and made great temporal sacrifices when he changed his faith from the rich man's church to the poor man's church.

There were two leading theologians who took a public part in that controversy. Those were the Protestant Bishop of Toronto, John Strachan, and the Very Rev. William Peter Macdonald, the Vicar-General of Upper Canada. The former I saw quite frequently in Toronto, when formerly residing here, and the latter I knew well when a boy in Hamilton. Both were Scotchmen, and if I am not mistaken, Dr. Strachan had left the Presbyterian for the Episcopal church.

It will be remembered that Captain Elmsley gave publicly in a pamphlet his reasons for abandoning the Church of England, and that Bishop Strachan controverted those reasons, and then the Vicar-General replied to Bishop Strachan's line of argument.

The Vicar-General was a very learned man and a great controversialist, and his memory should not be forgotten. I propose to here give a short sketch of his life and labors so far as the few materials at my hands will allow me. For several years his face and voice were familiar to me as a boy and I approached him with much reverence. This was between the years 1812 and 1815, in Hamilton.

There were no less than twenty priests of the name of Macdonald and Macdonald in Canada before there was a diocese erected in Upper Canada. The first Bishop was the Rev. Alex. Macdonell, and for more than thirty years his life was devoted to the Catholic missions of Upper Canada. He travelled from the province line at Coteau du Lac to Lake Superior. In the year 1826 the Rev. William Peter Macdonald came to Canada from Scotland, to take charge of the Catholic Seminary at St. Raphael's in Glengarry County. He was born in the parish of Eberlow, Banffshire, on the 25th of March, 1771. He was sent at an early age by Bishop Hay to the College of Donay, but at the outbreak of the French revolution he was compelled to leave that institution, and he finished his studies at the Scotch College of Valladolid in Spain. He was ordained there on the 29th of November, 1790, and returned to Scotland, where for twelve years he performed the laborious duties of a missionary priest. About the year 1801 the British Cabinet having formed the project of conveying the remains of Ferdinand VII. from Bayonne, Rev. Mr. Macdonald was recommended as a fit person to be employed in that enterprise, particularly as he had perfect mastery of the French and Spanish languages. He accordingly proceeded on his mission and cruised off Quebec for some time, but in consequence of some information received by the French Directory, this project of the British Government was abandoned. Father Macdonald was afterwards employed on the British embassy in Spain for four years, after which he was appointed a chaplain in the regular army.

In 1826 he came to Canada on the invitation of Bishop Macdonell to take charge of the Seminary at St. Raphael's, which was known as the College of Iona. It was a very modest institution, but it produced some of the most efficient missionaries of the time, among whom may be mentioned Rev. Geo. Hay of St.

Andrew's (afterwards secretary of Bishop Power), Rev. Michael Brennan of Belleville, and Very Rev. Gordon of Hamilton, all of whom the writer has seen.

He afterwards was removed to Kingston, where among his other duties he edited the first Catholic newspaper in Ontario, "The Catholic." This was in 1830. After the death of Bishop Macdonell and after Father Power from Nova Scotia was made the first Bishop of Toronto, he was located at Hamilton, then rapidly increasing in population. Here he resumed the publication of "The Catholic," which was kept up from 1841 to 1844. It was an eight-page sheet, the size of the pages being small and only four columns to the page. It was largely taken up with controversial matter and original poetry of the Vicar's own writing. One of those poems on "The Power of Money," was continued from week to week.

The Vicar lived in a one-story and basement stone cottage, situated a little west of the rough-cast church which was located on the site of the present cathedral. The burying ground was the church yard, where many bodies were interred, including that of the writer's father.

When old age had afflicted "the old Vicar" he was removed to St. Michael's Palace in Toronto, where he died on Good Friday, April 2nd, 1847, and was buried on the Gospel side of the choir. I remember well the news of his death coming to Hamilton, when many of his old parishioners were in tears.

I remember his jubilee celebration in Hamilton, when he was fifty years a priest and received a second ordination. The ceremony was not a very imposing one, but I do not remember now who the celebrants were, but think Bishop Power was present. Bishop Macdonell had a second consecration too, after being fifty years a priest, and his funeral oration when the news of his death in Scotland was received, was pronounced by Very Rev. W. P. Macdonald in the Kingston Cathedral. At the time of his death the latter was 76 years of age.

Those Scotchmen were remarkable men and Bishop Strachan surely was. John Strachan was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, April 12, 1778. At the age of 19 he began his career as a teacher at Kettle. With the execution of Governor Simcoe's scheme to have a grammar school in every district in Upper Canada, and a university at the seat of government, young Strachan was chosen as a teacher and sailed from Greenock in August, 1799. He first went to Kingston, where he studied divinity under Rev. J. O'Kill Stuart, the rector of the town, and in the spring of 1803 he was admitted deacon. In the early summer of the next year he was consecrated priest and appointed to the mission of Cornwall, where he built up a famous school. It was not long until he took to himself a wife in the person of a widow named Mrs. McGill, who was considered a fair prize. In the year 1812, through the efforts of General Brock, he was transferred to York, to succeed Dr. Stuart. In 1813 by his remonstrances with General Dearborn of the American army, he saved York from being burned. At York he established the famous District Grammar School. In 1818 he was appointed member of the Executive and Legislative Council, remaining in the former from 1838 and in the latter until 1811. To his exertions were due the establishment of the University of Toronto and of Upper Canada College. He was afterwards instrumental in the establishment of Trinity College, of which he laid the corner stone.

When the Diocese of Quebec was divided in 1839 Rev. John Strachan, D.D., and LL.D., was made the first Bishop of the See of Toronto, and was consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury. He built St. James' Cathedral and rebuilt it in 1850, after the big fire of 1849 on Good Friday. He died at his front street palace November 1st, 1867. He lies buried in the chancel of St. James' Cathedral, which is a monument to his memory.

The writer saw him many a time as he walked briskly along the streets whistling, dressed in his peculiar costume of cocked hat, black knee breeches, black ecclesiastical coat with big buttons, leather apron and silk stockings. He was a small-sized man but well and roundly formed.

Many anecdotes used to be told of Bishop Strachan, one of which was about a brother's visit to him from Scotland. He occupied the finest house in the town and the brother was astonished at the magnificence of its furnishings. He is reported to have said: "John, you have a fine house and fine furniture, I hope you came by them honestly."

## A Great School

An educational institution which can show an actual daily attendance of 468 students gathered from all parts of the Dominion, and whose graduates are eagerly sought for by business firms, may reasonably be termed a great school. The one business training school in Canada which enjoys this standing is the Central Business College of Toronto. The catalogue issued by this well known school is an interesting production and may be had on application to the Principal, Mr. W. H. Shaw.

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## Trinity College, Dublin

To the Editor of The Register:

Sir,—Will you allow a word from a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin—an institution in the minds of your readers just now.

Trinity College has been the one college of the University of Dublin, since its foundation, 394 years ago. It was founded as part of the policy for Anglicizing and Protestantizing Ireland.

In 1873 it was thrown open to all religions; not only for students, but for all positions of emolument and authority.

Still, Trinity College has remained Protestant—some 85 per cent of its pupils being Episcopalians; not because of any law, but because Catholics naturally had not gone to it. "Would you," said Mr. Balfour to a Protestant, "send your sons to a university as Catholic (though no more so), as the University of Dublin is Protestant?" And he answered for himself and for his hearers: "I would not; and you know you generally would not."

The result is the present crisis. Irish Catholic youths are getting more and more high school training, but there is no university for them to go to, or to which they will or can go to. All they can do is to prepare in colleges or schools for the Royal University, or Examining Board, and by passing its examinations, thus to get degrees.

Trinity College is anxious for Catholics to go to it. Formerly Catholics had to sacrifice faith to get degrees there; later they had to sacrifice it to get certain honors. Catholics have equal rights there now, and have no such sacrifice to make. Further, Trinity College now offers to build within the college grounds a Catholic chapel, to match the Protestant one, and to endow the office of a dean of residence, a priest, to look after Catholic students. And a Catholic Faculty of Theology is proposed to match the Protestant one.

Thus, Trinity College would be more like a German university, to which Catholics and Protestants go together, including Catholic students for the priesthood.

But the Irish bishops still reject the offers made by Trinity College. And as the Irish Catholic of Dublin says, while still holding out hopes that Trinity College may be further transformed, and made acceptable to Catholics, and it says something more must be done. A Catholic school of philosophy must be established, if not of history. The Bishop of Limerick said he would not, in the university he contemplated, claim a Catholic professorship of history, as he would one of philosophy, because history dealt with facts, while philosophy dealt with opinions. And besides a Catholic school of philosophy provision for Catholics on the governing board must be made without waiting till Catholics now entering take future places by right of seniority.

What Catholic critics in Canada, however, should keep clearly in mind is that Trinity College is governed from within, by those the Fellows, who are "elected" after a test purely by examination. One is "elected" yearly. The successful candidate last year was a Catholic. There is nothing to prevent a Catholic being the successful candidate every year except lack of ability to pass their extraordinarily heavy examinations. Against Catholics taking Trinity College by storm, "swamping" it, there is no legal obstacle now. It may not be the best policy that they should do so; and the bishops declare against it, as things are. But the question—or a question—remains, will it be the most possible, or the only possibly successful policy, with a Trinity College still further transformed?

The opinions of Canadian priests seem very largely in favor of this policy including (in my opinion) that of priests from Ireland. At least it is well there should be no misunderstanding of facts in this unhappy business, which is my excuse for writing.

Yours truly,  
 W. F. B. STOCKLEY.

He who appreciates great minds or noble characters does himself, not them, honor and service.

## Crimeless Ireland

In an article dealing with the official statistics of juvenile crime in England and Scotland, the "Daily Chronicle," of London, says:

"Perhaps the most remarkable paragraph in the report is the following: 'Ireland has a population almost equal to that of Scotland, but in Scotland the imprisonments are nearly double those inflicted in Ireland.' 'To a great extent this disparity may be due, as the report conjectures, to the fact that the penalties inflicted are as a rule heavier in Scotland than in Ireland, and that in consequence fines are more frequently paid in the latter country; but it is not suggested that this explanation covers the whole case. Politically Paddy may be the most troublesome boy of the three in Dame Britannia's school, but from the point of view of the criminal statistician he is emphatically the good boy.'

## Lincoln a Catholic

Father John W. Moore of Philadelphia, mentions a fact not generally known, viz., that Lincoln was a Catholic, but owing no doubt to the secrecy of priests in Illinois, where Lincoln lived, and to his environment, he drifted away from the faith of his fathers.

Father Moore says that Father St. Cyr, an old pioneer priest of Illinois who afterwards died at the convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Carondelet, St. Louis, Mo., told Fathers James McGill, C.M., of Germantown, and Thomas J. Smith, C.M., of Perryville, Mo., who paid Father St. Cyr a visit one day for the express purpose of finding out something about Lincoln, that Lincoln was a Catholic.

Father St. Cyr said that he often celebrated Mass in Abraham Lincoln's father's house, and that young Abraham Lincoln, who was a boy then of some 10 or 13 years of age, frequently served his mass.

A certain Bishop was once asked: "What is the simplest way to heaven?" He replied: "Turn to the right and go straight on."—Light.

## Resolution of Condolence

At the regular meeting of Branch No. 19, I.C.B.U., the following resolution was passed:

Whereas it has pleased Almighty God in His infinite wisdom to remove by death Mrs. Peter Haffey, the mother of our past Financial and Recording Secretaries, Misses W. and M. Haffey.

Resolved that we, the officers and members of said branch, do hereby tender our sincere sympathy to our bereaved sister, members and family in this their hour of affliction.

Be it further resolved that this resolution be entered in the minutes of the meeting and a copy be sent to bereaved family and also to the Catholic Register.

L. FAYLE, \* C. BALL,  
 President, Rec. Secretary.

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## An Appeal to Christian Charity

Editor of The Register:

Dear Sir,—Would you kindly insert the following lines in your paper where they might come to the knowledge of whomsoever has a warm heart for the suffering members of God's family here below:

"My Dear Friends,—Appeals of every kind and description are nothing new these days. They are of common occurrence in our daily and weekly newspapers; they depict in glowing colors the pitiable condition of this or that community, of such or another work of mercy threatened by imminent danger if Christian charity does not avert the danger. How often are such sad stories, telling the public of the life-work of some far-away servant of God and humanity works built up and cemented with their very heart-blood, how often, I say, are such dreary and heartrending tales not read with the same undisturbed spirit where with we glance over the columns reporting the daily railway accidents. They are read, but instead of stirring up some gentler feelings in hearts that claim to be human, they often produce but a smile of scorn on the lips of the reader, who, shrugging his shoulders will give vent to his feelings in words like these: 'After all it is nothing but nonsense, a made-up story whereof nine-tenths are at least the result of exaggeration. No doubt the writer would have done better, had he consecrated his leisure moments in finding out some branch of industry whereby to support his work, than in penning such a worthless article.'

The final result is that the cry of some distressed Brother in Christ remains unheeded, words intended to promote the honor and glory of God and Holy Mother the Church, works wherein the foundation for the welfare both spiritual and temporal of many a destitute member of humanity is to be laid—are left without assistance, their existence being but a painful lingering between life and death; whilst those in charge of such institutions are to live in continual anxiety. Repeatedly have I appealed to Christian charity, but the result obtained tells me that the effect produced by my appeals must have been as described above. The first part of the winter is now past. We have had to struggle hard to get year's crops, we have even tried to save something up for the next summer, but alas! how is it possible when there is hardly enough for the present moment? In winter some kindhearted persons at least grant an occasional thought to the poor, whilst in summer such a thing is of the rarest occurrence. Then everyone seems to have set his heart on things of a different nature: sports, excursions, summer-resorts and thousands of other amenities of life demand the whole attention of the happy possessor of this world's goods, but the poor are forgotten. They see how money is simply thrown away, they sigh in grief and sorrow, saying: 'Why can't I have a tiny share in life's luxuries under the form of a loaf of bread to still the hunger that torments me now for so many days? Was this the intention of God in lavishing His material blessings on the world's favorites to see them squandered in such frivolities?'

Is he wrong in speaking thus? May every one judge for himself. But let me bring this chapter to a close. My dear readers, I hope you will not refuse a little assistance to a crowd of poor orphan children thrust into this wide and cold-hearted world without any one to love them or to care for them. The winter, especially when as cold as this year, is always hard on them, but the summer is sometimes harder still. Last year we have spent a few months in untold anxiety. Hardly anything came in, and when at the end of the month the baker handed in his bill, there was often not a cent wherewith to pay it. I dread the same thing again for this year and not without reason. For the love of God and the sake of your own immortal soul have pity with the poor children. Any contribution however so small shall be gratefully accepted, and you may rest assured that the kind donors will not be forgotten in the Orphans' prayers.

Wishing to all the blessings of Heaven, I remain,  
 Yours respectfully in Christ,  
 REV. W. BRUECK, O.M.I.

St. Patrick's Orphanage, Prince Albert, Sask., N.W.T., Canada.

Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P., has announced that he will run candidates for at least nine seats in Ulster at the General Election. They will advocate a large reduction in the cost of the government of Ireland, chiefly with regard to law and police expenses.

## IRELAND'S MISGOVERNMENT

Lord Dunraven Leader of the Devolution Party Says things are Worse than in Russia

One of the most notable addresses of the past week in Ireland was delivered by the Earl of Dunraven before a distinguished audience under the auspices of the Irish Reform Association in Dublin. Col. Hutcheson-Poe moved Prof. Mahaffey of Trinity College to the chair.

The Earl of Dunraven, who was received with applause, in the course of his address, said that to show the necessity for reform in Irish affairs was practically the same thing as speaking in defence of the objects and principles of the Irish Reform Association, the object of which was to labor to bring about reforms, not only in the administration of the country, but also to labor to bring about a larger and truer conception of the needs and requirements of the country, and also a truer conception among Irishmen of their several duties towards their common country (applause). Ireland differentiates in a great many important respects from the Sister Kingdom. Some people seem to think that the Act of Union was the final phase in a long, gradual process of amalgamation that had been going on. By the Act of Union the two Legislatures were amalgamated, and shortly afterwards the two Exchequers.

A Voice—By bribery, by fraud. Lord Dunraven said that a real unification did not take place, had not taken place, and as far as he could see, never would take place in the same way and to the same extent that amalgamation took place, for instance, between the several independent and semi-independent States that at one time constituted what was now France or Great Britain. The peoples of the two islands had not become, and never would become, in his opinion, thoroughly amalgamated (hear, hear, and applause). Ireland had a peculiar Government of her own, a form of Government which, as far as he knew, was different from any form of Government that existed anywhere else, and which was interposed between the people of Ireland and the Imperial Parliament. He wanted to give his REASONS. WHY HE WAS PROFOUNDLY DISSATISFIED

with the system of government which Ireland did not enjoy, and also why he thought it essential that a truer and larger conception of the whole problem of Ireland should be entertained by Parliament and by the predominant partner, and why, if anything was to be done for Ireland it was, perhaps, above all things, essential that Irishmen should learn to help each other and to work together (applause). The system of Irish Government was a very peculiar system. It consisted of a Lord Lieutenant and Governor-General, who was, theoretically, supreme but who had practically no power whatever except over the police and the administration of justice. He wielded the policeman's baton, and very little else. He was powerful to punish, but he was powerless to help, to lead, and to encourage the people (hear, hear). The Lord Lieutenant was assisted by a Chief Secretary who represented him in Parliament. The Chief Secretary had control over some departments; over other departments he had a kind of partial control; and over other kinds he exercised no control at all. Though the appointments of the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary were political appointments, that had the great advantage that it ensured that the Irish Government was placed continuously in the hands of gentlemen who knew nothing whatever about Ireland or Ireland's needs (applause). The system also had this advantage that as soon as they began to know something about them they went away (laughter and applause). The affairs of the country were administered by 40 OR 41 DEPARTMENTS.

Some of these departments were fed by money on the votes in Parliament. Others were fed, partially at any rate, from the Consolidated Fund. In the first case it was just possible that the money voted might come under the criticism, and, to a very slight extent, under the influence of Irish members of Parliament. But in the other case, neither the Irish members of Parliament nor any other members of Parliament had any control.

(Continued on page 5.)

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