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THE CONVENTION AT BUFFALO.

FIRST DAY, FEBRUARY 12.

The Irish Emigrant Aid Convention held its first session on the 12th instant, at Dudley Hall. The business transacted was entirely of a preliminary nature, and only the delegates were present. The Convention was called to order at four o'clock, by Very Rev. Mr. McDonnell, Vicar General of Kingston, C.W., who officiated as President *pro tem*; Messrs. Hayes, of Toronto, and Cosgrove, of Hartford, Conn., acting as Secretaries.

A committee was appointed to examine and report upon the credentials of delegates. This committee consisted of six—three from the United States and three from Canada, as follows:—

United States—Rev. J. Dean, of Buffalo, Chairman; Thomas D'Arcy M'Gee, of New York; Dr. Hassett, of Detroit, Michigan.

Canada—Bernard Devlin, of Montreal; T. J. O'Neill, of Toronto; D. Murphy, of Hamilton.

The committee retired, and after a brief absence reported that the number of delegates in attendance was sixty-five. Of these, fifteen were Catholic clergymen, and the rest belonged to the laity.

After the report of the committee, the delegates took their seats. A committee on Permanent Organization was then appointed, consisting of the following members:—

United States—James O'Brien, of Charleston, Mass., Chairman; Thomas D'Arcy M'Gee, of New York; P. M'Mahon, of Cattaraugus, N.Y.; Chas. Corkery, of Dubuque, Iowa; Rev. Mr. Moore, of Buffalo, N.Y.

Canada—Rev. Mr. Harkin, of Quebec; J. O'Brien, of Hamilton, J. B. Williams, of Chatham; Geo. E. Clerk, of Montreal; James Burke, of Ottawa City.

The Convention, in accordance with an invitation, then agreed to attend High Mass, to be celebrated at the Cathedral the following morning.

On motion, the Convention adjourned to 10 o'clock the following day.

SECOND DAY.

In compliance with the resolution passed yesterday by the Convention, the delegates attended High Mass in the Cathedral. Very Rev. Mr. Bede, Vicar-General, officiated. After the ceremony the delegates proceeded in a body to Dudley Hall, where the Convention was called to order by the President, Very Rev. Mr. McDonnell. The following report of the Committee on Temporary Organization was received and adopted:—

President—Very Rev. Dean Kirwan, of London, C.W.

Vice-Presidents—Judge Corkery of Dubuque, and Dr. Hassett, of Detroit.

Treasurer—Mr. Lennon of Boston.

Secretaries—M. M'Mahon of Albany, N.Y., and P. Murtagh of St. Thomas, C.W.

Chaplain—Very Rev. Dr. Bede of Buffalo.

The Committee on Credentials reported a number of newly arrived delegates, which, added to those reported yesterday, made about eighty in attendance.

The following are the names as well as we could learn:—

UNITED STATES.

NEW YORK.

- Albany—Mathew M'Mahon.
- Buffalo—Very Rev. P. Bede, V.G.; Rev. Mr. Moore, Rev. James Early, Rev. Francis O'Farrell, Rev. J. Dean, Maurice Vaughan.
- Cassanovia—Rev. J. P. Cahill.
- Cattaraugus—Patrick M'Mahon.
- New York City—Thomas D'Arcy M'Gee.
- Oswego—Doctor Lawrence Reynolds.
- Rochester—Rev. Mr. M'Evoy.
- Niagara Falls—T. Karanagh and James M'Garry.
- Scottsville—Ref. James M'Glew.

MASSACHUSETTS.

- Boston—Martin Lennon.
- Charlestown—James O'Brien.
- Lawrence—J. O'Hea Cantillon.
- Quincy—George Cahill.

CONNECTICUT.

- Hartford—P. Cosgrove.
- New Haven—Rev. M. Hart and B. O'Reilly.

NEW JERSEY.

- Jersey City—Rev. Mr. Kelly.

PENNSYLVANIA.

- Erie—Captain James M'Bride.
- Pittsburgh—Very Rev. Mr. M'Mahon, V.G.

OHIO.

- Cleveland—Rev. Mr. O'Neill and Captain E. H. Barron.
- Columbus—J. W. Purcell.

MICHIGAN.

- Detroit—Dr. Hassett and Hugh O'Beirne.
- Washtona—C. O'Flynn and Roderick O'Connor.

ILLINOIS.

Chicago—Very Rev. Dr. Dunn, Charles M'Donnell and Patrick Hall.

Galena—Rev. P. T. M'Ilherna.

La Salle—Very Rev. Mr. O'Reilly, V.G.

Peoria—Thomas Kennedy.

MISSOURI.

Rev. Dr. Lyons, P. Deegan, and P. Gregory.

IOWA.

Dubuque—Judge Corkery.

Fort Dodge—Rev. J. Vahey.

Sioux City—Rev. Mr. Tracey.

CANADA.

EAST.

Montreal—Bernard Devlin and George E. Clerk.

Quebec—Rev. Mr. Nelligan and Rev. Mr. Harkin.

WEST.

Brantford—Rev. Mr. Ryan and Roger Carten.

Chatham—P. J. Flood and J. B. Williams.

Dundas—P. Freiland and Thomas Gray.

Hamilton—Very Rev. S. Gordon, V.G., M. J. O'Beirne, Daniel Murphy and C. J. Tracey.

Ingersoll—Wm. Featherston and Jas. Murdock.

Kingston—Very Rev. Mr. McDonnell, V.G., and John Patterson.

London—Very Very Dean Kirwan, Rev. Mr. Beall, Counsellor P. G. Morris and John Wright.

Norfolk County—D. O'Connell.

Ottawa City—James Burke.

Perth—Very Rev. J. M'Donagh, T. J. Tims and John Doran.

St. Catharines—Rev. Mr. Grattan, Richd. Dunn, Thomas M'Floy and John M'Kenna.

St. Thomas—Peter Murtagh and J. Bobier.

Stratford-on-Avon—Rev. P. J. Connelly.

Toronto—Michael Hayes and T. J. O'Neill.

Wellington—Michael Cox and John Carroll.

The President, on motion, appointed a committee of five to nominate business and other committees.—

The following report was adopted:—

Committee to inquire into the location and value of the best lands in the United States, consisting of the following gentlemen:

Judge O'Beirne of Detroit, Michigan; Captain Barron of Cleveland, Ohio; Rev. Mr. Vahey of Fort Dodge, Iowa; Very Rev. Dr. Dunn of Chicago, Ill.; Rev. Dr. Lyons of Missouri.

The committee to inquire into the location and value of the best lands in Canada consisted of the following:

Very Rev. Dr. McDonnell of Kingston, C.W.; Rev. Mr. Harkin of Quebec, C.E.; Michael Hayes of Toronto, C.W.; John B. Williams of Chatham, C.W.; James Burke of Ottawa City, C.W.

The following composed a committee appointed to report upon a plan of future action in regard to the objects for which the Convention was organized:—

Very Rev. Mr. M'Donagh of Perth, C.W.; B. Devlin of Montreal, C.E.; Dr. Reynolds of Oswego; Captain M'Bride of Pennsylvania; Rev. J. P. Cahill of Albany, N.Y.; Charles O'Brien of Charlestown, Mass.; C. J. Tracey of Hamilton, C.W.

After the appointment of the following Committee on Finance, the Convention adjourned:—

T. J. O'Neill of Toronto, C.W.; T. D. M'Gee of New York; T. O'Hea Cantillon of Lawrence, Mass; George Cahill of Quincy, Mass.; Rev. Mr. Nelligan of Quebec, C.E.; P. M'Mahon of New York; John Patterson of Kingston, C.W.

In the afternoon Session, the following Address was delivered by the Reverend Chairman:—

Very Reverend Brethren and Gentlemen, Delegates of the Catholic body of the United States and Canada—I beg to call your attention to the object for which you are assembled, and the important duties that devolve on you. To you is confided the highest trust that a people can bestow on their fellow-citizens. You were elected by the Catholic body of the United States and Canada to take counsel together for the purpose of devising the means of protecting the immigrant and placing him in a position in which he can safely enjoy the rights and privileges of a citizen under the broad shelter of the Constitutions of our respective governments. We are not assembled to place ourselves or our countrymen in antagonism with any party or body, or to violate the laws of the governments under which we live; but to place them in a position in which they may enjoy the benefit and protection of those laws—the privileges, rights and immunities of our respective Constitutions, by which the freedom of worship—the protection of life and property—are amply guaranteed. Without the enjoyment of these, which are the birth-right of man, life itself is burdensome and intolerable. The enjoyment of these makes the freeman. He that does not possess them is, in reality, a slave.—

"Jove fixed it certain that whatever day Makes man a slave takes half his worth away."

To uphold the laws and the Constitution as the firmest bulwark of our rights, privileges, and duties,

shall be the first lesson we will impress on the mind of the immigrant. The deplorable state of thousands of immigrants living in the large seaboard towns and along railroads and canals, and who are wholly depending on the precarious day's wages for the support of themselves and families, is a subject which will require your most serious attention and consideration, with the view of devising means of placing them and their families in a position in which they may turn their labor into a more profitable channel, so that they may secure a livelihood by honest industry. The dependent state of the immigrant, when he arrives on the American shores, may be traced to the unlimited and irresponsible power exercised by Irish and Scotch landlords, who, under legal sanction, evict the cottier class, without compensation for labor, time, or improvements expended on the soil, and place them in the deplorable and lamentable position of perishing by the ditch side, exposed to the inclemency of the weather, or the still less enviable alternative of emigrating; friendless and penniless, to these shores. It is this state of things, resulting from feudal and irresponsible power, the relic of barbarism, which has imposed on you the necessity of meeting here to-day for the purpose of taking counsel together and devising means by which those down-trodden victims of landlord oppression and irresponsible domination might be relieved and emancipated from the worse than Egyptian bondage endured on the railroads, canals, and cities of America. Colonization seems to me, as I am sure it does to you, the most practicable and available means of accomplishing the end in view. I might refer you to a practical illustration effected by two illustrious individuals—Bishop McDonnell and the Rev. Prince Galatzini. The noble colony of Glengarry owes its origin and existence to Bishop McDonnell, the founder and father of the Catholic Church in Western Canada. For proof of intellect and forethought, he has not bequeathed an equal to the infant and flourishing Church of that province. The history of the other distinguished person is so well known that I need not dwell on it. I know not whether a monument or headstone marks the spot where their mortal remains lie. Might we not do, in a more extended scale—I might say a national one—what these illustrious individuals have accomplished? The great body of our countrymen have been trained up to agricultural pursuits. It is the occupation with which they are best acquainted. The ownership and cultivation of the soil, as being the pursuit most congenial and suited to their early training, will be the surest means of realizing the object in view. There is another subject, though not directly falling within the scope of the object for which you are assembled, yet collaterally it does.—

It is of paramount importance. The erection of churches and school-houses in the townships or localities in which the immigrant resides. To supply pious and exemplary clergymen, who will minister to the spiritual wants of the people, and superintend the education of their children, is of vital importance. It will be, therefore, your duty to apply to the proper authorities, the zealous and learned bishops of the United States and Canada, for the accomplishment of these indispensable requirements. Our people, thank God, are a religious people. The respective localities may teem with fertility, or abound in mines of silver and gold; yet they will not enjoy peace or contentment, for the church and school-house are more precious in their estimation (and justly so) than the oasis of the desert, the pearl of the river, or the gold of California. There is an unfathomable depth in the soul of man, which the earth cannot fill. The grand and sublime truths of religion alone satisfy its cravings. Your mission is incomparably grand. I shall not, therefore, delay you longer from the arduous duties imposed on you. I hope and pray you will realize the expectations of the thousands who watch, with tremulous anxiety and hope, the result of your mature deliberations.

After the Very Reverend gentleman had finished his address, Resolutions were unanimously passed, repudiating the charge that the object of the Convention was to induce adopted citizens of the Republic to leave the United States; and defining its aim to be the promotion of colonization in any place which may be considered most conducive to the interest of the settlers.

THIRD DAY.

The Convention re-assembled at 10 o'clock. Eight new delegates were present, making ninety in all.

The Finance Committee reported forty-eight million dollars of Irish money in the Savings Banks of the United States.

A motion was made, and after a short debate withdrawn, ordering a correspondence with the Mexican Government about the prospects of colonization in Mexico.

An Address was ordered to be prepared and sent to the Catholics of the United States and Canada,

and a Committee was appointed to draft it. Adjourned.

FOURTH DAY.

The Convention met at the usual place and hour. The minutes were read and approved.

Mr. Gray, of Hamilton, C.W., proposed the reconsideration of the report of Committee on Organization, by which the number of the Canada Supreme Directory should be limited to five. Referred back to Committee on Organization.

The Committee then took a recess to consider.

T. D'Arcy M'Gee, of New York, moved that the States not represented at the present Convention be requested to send their detailed reports to the Supreme Directory in each county. Passed.

Judge O'Beirne submitted a report on Lands in the United States, referred back to them yesterday. The Committee on Lands in Canada also reported.

The Committee on the Address to the Irish settlers in the United States and Canada was then called for and reported through their Chairman, the Very Rev. Father M'Mahon, V.G., of Pittsburgh. It was adopted by acclamation.

The Committee on Organization returned from their recess and reported; and their report, as amended, was adopted. It recommended the establishment of paid agencies at Boston, New York, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, Chicago and St. Louis, and such places in Canada as the delegates from that quarter of North America may deem fit to select, for the purpose of giving such information to the Irish emigrant as he may require. Also, the appointment of an executive agent at or near each of the points mentioned, to whom shall be given the duty of superintending the paid agencies and regulating their affairs.

The Committee recommended the five following names for Supreme Directory of the United States; J. Manning, Buffalo; Rev. Mr. Kelly, of Jersey City; Rev. Mr. Hart, of New-Haven, Ct.; M. M'Mahon, of Albany, N.Y.; P. Donahoe, of Boston.

The Committee on Organization reported the names of the following persons to comprise the Supreme Directory of Canada:

Rev. Mr. Nelligan, of Quebec; B. Devlin, of Montreal; J. H. Burke, Ottawa City; T. J. O'Neill, Toronto; Rev. Dean Kirwan, London, C.W.

Mr. Devlin, of Montreal, in behalf of the Canadian delegates, moved a vote of thanks to the United States delegates for their kindness and hospitality.—

Carried with three cheers for United States delegates.

A vote of thanks was then given to the officers of the Convention; to T. D. M'Gee for his exertions in the cause, and to the Press of the United States and Canada who had advocated the objects of the Convention.

The American delegates then tendered a vote of thanks to the Canadian delegates for their presence, gentlemanly conduct and devotion to the common objects of all present.

It was then resolved that the time and place for the holding of the next Convention be referred to the Supreme Directories of Canada and the United States.

The Convention then adjourned *sine die*.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

The Committee on Finance have the honor to report that they have carefully considered the position of two classes of the constituents of this Convention, whom they may designate as emigrants with sufficient or partial means to become settlers, almost immediately, and emigrants with no other resources but willingness to work.

UNSETTLED EMIGRANTS WITH MEANS.

This class by which we describe those who have some personal but no real property, your committee have seen reason to believe, are more numerous in the old States than is usually supposed. They are also found in the Canadian cities, but in much less proportion than in United States seaports and manufacturing towns. The bulk of their surplus earnings is invested in savings institutions, or lies in the hands of corporations of employers, or is partly invested in loan funds and building associations. It is the impression of the committee that not five out of a hundred of them loan their money on mortgages, that consequently almost all their investments are made in institutions which yield the smallest amount of interest without the recompense of the least amount of risk. Of savings banks, as conducted in several of the States, we desire to speak with great plainness. They were originally the device of benevolence for the protection of the laborious poor; but they have very generally degenerated into agencies for speculators. The Secretary of the State of New York reported to the Legislature on the 9th of February last that the banks of this class in this State "are at present without any supervision;" that of two of them no active incorporation could be found; that