

THE TRUE WITNESS

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

Pages 17 to 20

MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1892.

GEN. T. F. MEAGHER.

THE MARCH OF THE SIXTY-NINTH.

An Extract from Michael Cavanagh's
Life of the Irish Patriot; Printed
in the "Boston Pilot."

Oh! 'twas a gallant day,
In memory still adored,
That day of our sun-bright nuptials,
With the musket and the sword!
Shrill rang the fife, and the bugles blared,
And beneath a cloudless heaven
Twinkled a thousand bayonets,
And the words were thirty-seven.
—Charles G. Halpin.

Of the half million human beings who witnessed the ovation given the Sixty-ninth on their march down Broadway on that memorable 23rd of April, 1861, but few of the survivors have forgotten the thrilling scenes, and least of all those of Irish birth or blood. They alone could comprehend it, for they alone could sympathize with, and share in, the mingled feelings that found expression in the stormy cheers and passionate prayers, the exultant pride, exuberant joy, and rapturous hope of the departing heroes; and the tears and blessings, the regrets, the caresses, and low, moaning wail of the dear ones who sorrowfully and lovingly bade them what might be a last farewell. Mother, wife, sister, sweetheart, all giving free vent to the well-springs of feeling, bubbling fresh and pure from their impulsive, kindly Irish hearts.

Nor were those manifestations of genuine Celtic nature confined to the relatives and near personal friends of the soldiers. How could they, on such an occasion, and with such surroundings? Not a man or woman of their sympathetic race could witness their emotions without being similarly affected. This was observable in the pale of flushed faces, the quivering, compressed lips and misty eyes, of rough, horny-handed toilers who, commiseratingly, looked on in respectful though silent sympathy; and in the unrestrained tears and audible wailings of the maids and matrons who constituted half, at least, of the dense and ever-increasing crowd that surged and swayed about their armed countrymen, during the hours in which the regiment was detained at the junction of Great Jones Street and Broadway, by the delay of the military authorities in furnishing the necessary equipments.

A little before 3 o'clock a loud and prolonged cheer announced the arrival, at the right of the line, of Col. Corcoran—accompanied by Thomas Francis Meagher and Judge Chas. P. Daly. The last-named gentleman, on behalf of his estimable lady, presented the regiment with a handsome silk flag of the Stars and Stripes, which was placed beside the green flag presented a short time previously by the citizens of New York to the Sixty-ninth, in appreciation of its action in declining to parade before the Prince of Wales. Then the long-expected command to march was given, and, under both flags, the regiment wheeled into Broadway, and proceeded down that noble thoroughfare on their way to the boat at pier number four, North River.

Then commenced the culminating scene of that eventful day—a scene the like of which has never been witnessed in New York, or (with, perhaps, one exception) been participated in by the "Children of the Gael"—either at home or abroad.

Michael Doheny, one of the most interested and deeply-affected witnesses of this outburst of genuine Celtic feeling,—whose great, loving, Irish heart throbbed responsive to every emotion which swayed the hearts of the mighty multitude—drew a parallel between it and the exception referred to above—the "Sailing of the Wild Geese," which, he justly observed, "must have surpassed it in the grandeur of its sorrow, but fallen short of it in enthusiasm." Continuing the description, he writes:—

"Every heart bled, every eye was wet, every face was flushed, every bosom palpitated. The highest passions of the Celtic race were stirred to their very depths. Vehemence, ardor, devotion, fidelity; strong, deep, untold love, were in the hearts and acts of all."

Yet, whatever general resemblance there may have been between the picture of Sarsfield's veterans parting from wives and children on the quay of Cork, and that presented by the departure of the Sixty-ninth from New York, there was an essential difference in the emotions which swayed the hearts of the principal figures in either of these historical scenes. The "Defenders of Limerick" left country and kindred with hearts filled with blackest hate and an implacable thirst for vengeance on the treacherous foes who, at the last moment, prevented their families from accompanying them into voluntary exile, while utter despair overwhelmed the poor disconsolate victims thus abandoned, and found expression in that agonized, soul-piercing wail, which, in concentrated misery, has never had a parallel on God's earth:—

"Their women's parting cry."

But no trace of despair was perceptible in the impassioned actions or utterances of those Irish women and girls who lined Broadway on that sunny April afternoon, and gave free vent to their emotions as their countrymen swept past,—though "sorrow," "regret" and "pity" found frequent and audible expression, and fears for the safety of son, brother or "friend" were occasionally whispered between sympathetic acquaintances.

But the sentiment which found most frequent expression from old and young was not that of sorrow or regret that their countrymen were going to battle—but that they were not going to battle on another field.

"Oh! what harm if they were going to fight elsewhere?"
"What harm if 'twas to Ireland they were going?"

These and similar expressions were repeated in such fervid and pathetic tones, all along the line of march, as to force sympathetic tears from nearly all who heard them—men, or women, of their warm-hearted race. At the halts along the route,—(and they were frequent and at brief intervals,—owing to the difficulty of forcing a passage through the crowded street),—impulsive rushes would be made for the soldiers,—kisses and prayers showered on them by their affectionate, sobbing countrywomen—with a "God bless ye, boys, and send ye safe home!" While a strong grasp of the hand, and a fervid "Remember your country, and keep up its credit, boys!" spoke the feelings of the men. Little cared they—those exiled "Children of the Gael"—what were their present surroundings, or who witnessed this ebullition of their feelings. They were parting "their own"—perhaps forever; and were oblivious to else in that all-absorbing fact. As "despair" found no expression in the emotions of their loving-hearted sister, so neither had "hatred," or a thirst for revenge, a place in the hearts or thoughts of the brave fellows who were the recipients of their affectionate leave-takings, and who resolutely marched to confront in deadly contest men who, a week before, were their fellow-citizens, but now, through some inconceivable fatality, transformed into enemies of the Constitution and Flag they had pledged their lives to defend. Honest pride in their adopted country; a feeling of gratitude which intensified their sense of duty to that country in its hour of peril, and an abiding hope of being some day—if God spared them—enabled to devote their soldierly experience to the liberation of the land of their birth and first love,—these constituted their actuating motives, and nerved them. And so they wended their way to the boat, far less impressed by the spirit-stirring music of the bands, or the thrilling cheers which from sidewalk to house-top greeted them on their line of march, than by those plaintive, affectionate salutations conveyed in the familiar accents which filled their hearts with tender memories of their old home—in that loved Isle beyond the sea.

Ordinary rubber ink erasers, it is said, will remove rust from polished cutlery without injury.

Many of the explosions in flour mills have been traced to electricity generated by belts.

A BLACKGUARD ATHEIST.

We hear a great deal about Col. Robert Ingersoll, his lectures, his literary refinement, his bright conceptions, his flashes of eloquence, his wonderful magnetism. If a man's conduct is an index of his character, and his words are the expression of his ideas, we have discovered the loudly-vaunted preacher of anti-Christian doctrines to be, both in language and in conduct, a blackguard Atheist. His lectures are tirades against God; his literary refinement consists in vilifying everything sacred, and with a collection of nauseating rubbish, gathered from the very vilest dregs of the history and literature of all ages, insulting millions on millions of citizens, as he did in the Chicago Auditorium the other night; his bright conceptions, consist of openly uttered and outrageously expressed blasphemies against the Almighty; his flashes of eloquence are the spasmodic efforts of a hell-inspired sensationalist; his wonderful magnetism is simply the load-stone of evil that draws the hard steel of heartless humanity to itself and away from all that is good, noble, elevating, spiritual, or divine.

The insults which Ingersoll pours out upon all Christians in the world suffice to prove him to be an Atheist of the worst and vilest stamp; but the ungentlemanly, the deliberate, the wanton insult which he offered to Brother Maurelian at the Grand Pacific hotel, the other day, is enough to rank him amongst the most prominent blackguards of our age. Brother Maurelian's statement and criticism were published by the Chicago Herald, Inter-Ocean and News Record, and we reproduce a portion of it for the edification of our readers. Brother Maurelian is a member of the order of Christian Brothers, and has been chosen to prepare and oversee the Catholic Educational Exhibit for the World's Fair. We can easily judge of the reverend gentleman's standing in the eyes of the Catholic educated world just read his statements with regard to Ingersoll. It is easy to understand that a man, like Ingersoll, who publicly blasphemes God, ridicules what others hold sacred, and deliberately insults millions of citizens, will have little or no regard for the ordinary rules of polite society that require in every man, at least, the conduct of a gentleman. Let Brother Maurelian tell the story:

"Last Saturday forenoon I called at the Grand Pacific Hotel to inquire if Bishop Spalding had arrived. The clerk whom I accosted replied, 'Yes sir; but he will be engaged until after 12 o'clock.' I then requested that my card be sent, asking at what hour an interview would be convenient. The colored boy returned shortly and informed me that the Bishop was in Room 33, parlor floor, and that he desired me to call at once.

On entering Room 33 I found a number of persons, among whom one of the gentlemen arose, and, after mutual greeting, I asked if Bishop Spalding were in the room, to which he replied: 'No, sir; Bishop Spalding is not here.' I then remarked that there must have been a mistake at the office, for I was told Bishop Spalding awaited me in Room 33. This same gentleman, without giving me a moment's time to excuse myself and leave, then continued: 'But I am a Bishop; I am a Pope; I am Colonel Robert Ingersoll; don't you see the danger into which you have fallen?' And this was said in a loud tone, with all the emphasis and sarcasm possible, and it naturally provoked a laugh at my expense among the ladies and gentlemen present.

I felt intensely mortified, and could easily have convinced the company of their failure in observing the most common proprieties of life under the circumstances; but mindful of the cause I serve, of those whom I represent, and of my own character, I felt that even under such a deliberate and gross insult, coming as it did from persons so very pretentious of elegance, culture, and refinement, I should be superior to the occasion and always act the gentleman. I simply made the remark that I trusted they would excuse the stupid mistake made at the office in directing me to Room No. 33, and without evidencing any perturbation, I politely bowed myself out. Returning to the office I called the same clerk and told him of the stupid mistake made by the colored boy in directing me to Colonel Ingersoll's room instead of that of Bishop Spalding. After consulting one of the bookkeepers, the clerk informed me that the Bishop had not yet arrived.

Concerning the occurrence I have this to say: The insult offered to me personally, and through me, to those I represent, and their cause, is perfectly in keeping with the ridicule, the blasphemy, and the extravagant and gratuitous twaddle, which, in his lectures, Colonel Ingersoll has for years heaped indiscriminately upon the Church and upon every denomination of Christians, as well as upon any of the ideas and teachings of religion and morality, just as he has fancied. I am astonished that a man of his acquirements should prostitute his intellectual faculties and his ability to the base purpose of insulting and trifling with the most sacred rights guaranteed all American citizens by the Constitution of

the United States in their religious belief according to the best of their knowledge and the dictates of their conscience.

From a religious and moral point of view, many of this man's utterances, as they appear in print, are regarded by intelligent and self-respecting people, as the vilest excesses in literature. His lectures consist of a series of illogical statements and incongruous narratives, most of them from unreliable and obscure authors, and with such distortions, suppressions, perversions, and ingenious embellishments as to destroy all their historical accuracy.

Such is the matter which this man uses to blaspheme God, to vilify the Holy Scriptures, and to deride and ridicule Christianity and all relating thereto. Illiterate people no doubt consider him a very learned and a great man; those to whose prejudices and passions he panders regard him as their champion, but those who are in any degree scholarly and those who have even a moderate knowledge of history, cannot do otherwise than to turn away in disgust from his blasphemous utterances and his arrant nonsense.

It is very unfortunate that illiterate, capable, and unthinking people, as well as those of mere superficial knowledge, and those imbued with a morbid craving for whatever is sensational, are carried away by the plausibility and the fanciful utterances of a man who speaks irreverently of Almighty God Himself, and who affects the utmost contempt for all ideas and things and other people hold in most sacred. On the other hand it is a consoling fact that the vast majority of our American citizens unite with George Washington, the father of our glorious republic, in maintaining that "of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports," and that "National morality can not prevail if religious principles be excluded," and this is why well-informed, self-respecting, and intelligent people are not influenced by Colonel Ingersoll's cant, realizing that mere illogical assertions, ridicule, blasphemy, scurrility, misrepresentation, gross exaggerations, and calling names, are no arguments.

Curiously to see a noted sensationalist and to hear a glib talker are probably the real reasons why large audiences occasionally attend his lectures. Those who go to hear this man do as people who enjoy the clown in a circus; they do not go to hear anything instructive, solid, or intellectual; they expect from the circus clown silly and foolish utterances, to make them laugh. The circus clown will, however, take care not to outrage other people's most cherished feelings and ideas.

Colonel Ingersoll, by his insulting utterances, places himself far beneath the level of a common circus clown; in his utterances he ridicules and trifles with the feelings, ideas, and most sacred rights of American citizens. We boast of our Christian civilization, and why should not all the self-respecting elements of the United States join with Washington, the Father of our glorious country, in making this monster of infidelity feel "that every man conducting himself as a good citizen, and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience."

Finally, I have had practical evidence of the fact that Colonel Ingersoll is not a gentleman, for politeness teaches a man to respect the discomfort of a stranger in presence of company, especially when that stranger accidentally stands in the attitude of a guest and for the time being deserves at his hands the most ordinary courtesy of life.

The remains of Pius IX. the grand and saintly pontiff of holy memory, repose in the Basilica of St. Lawrence, a little beyond the walls of Rome, in the old Tiburtine way. Lady Herbert has translated an interesting pamphlet, written by Count Acqueduni, of Bologna, upon the tomb of the great Pope. In it we find the following details, that cannot fail to interest our readers:—

"The Basilica is composed of two distinct churches, anciently leaning against each other, though separated from each other, whilst nowadays they are joined together and form only one church. The fore one, more spacious and higher, was built by holy Pope Sixtus III., from 432 to 440. The aft one, more ancient and lower, was erected by Emperor Constantine the Great, upon the tomb of the martyr saint at the level of the catacombs, and thoroughly prepared, later on, by Pope Pelagius II., from 578 to 590. The central nave of the latter church, now raised much higher up, is to-day the Presbytery; whilst underneath, at the original level of the said church, lies the modern crypt of St. Lawrence and St. Stephen, proto-martyr, which on three sides is flanked by the ancient smaller naves. One of these smaller naves, the transversal one, which closes the further end of the Basilica, and to which Christian Archaeologists give the Greek name of *Narthex*, is the place chosen by the immortal Pontiff Pius IX. to receive his remains, and has been subsequently decorated in the most sumptuous manner, so to form now, around the humble tomb, a magnificent monument, intended to show to posterity the deep veneration of the children for such a Father, and to be in the meantime a perpetual and solemn reparation for the sacrilegious outrages to which his remains were exposed on the night of the 18th of July, 1881."