

# Montreal News

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## THE LATE REV. JAMES J. MURPHY.

Rev. JAMES J. MURPHY was born in the County of Wicklow, 25 Dec., 1842, and educated in Maynooth College, where he graduated with the greatest distinction. He was elevated to the Priesthood in 1870, and shortly afterwards appointed to the position of Professor of Moral Theology and Sacred History, in Cardinal Cullen's Seminary, at Clonliffe, which calling he fulfilled with marked ability and success. A few years later he visited England where he was introduced to Cardinal Manning, who gave him much encouragement. During his stay in England he formed the acquaintance also of the foremost literary men of the day, all of whom much admired his literary attainments; subsequently he crossed over to France, where he spent some months the guest of the late lamented author Dom Guéranger. He next visited America to see his two brothers, one of whom is a distinguished physician in Washington, and the other resides in Boston. It was during this visit to the United States, that he became intimately acquainted with the Jesuit Fathers and conceived the idea of becoming a member of their Society. He, consequently, came on to Montreal and entered the Noviciate at Sault au Recollet. The Rev. Gentleman passed some eight months in this institution, during all of which time he endeared himself to all. Not finding himself called to this kind of work, however, he retired from the House in July, 1874, and was immediately introduced to the Bishop of Montreal by the Jesuit Fathers. The Bishop gave him the most cordial reception, and offered him a position in the Diocese, which Father Murphy was pleased to accept, and was appointed Professor of Moral and Dogmatic Theology at Terrebonne College. He filled this position with unusual ability until the sad burning of this flourishing institution. We next find him in the city distinguishing himself as a pleasing and cultured lecturer. On the demise of the late much-respected Geo. E. Clerk, Editor of the *True Witness*, Father Murphy was offered the Editorial Chair, which offer he accepted, and was conducting the journal with great success when thus suddenly torn from our midst. The Rev. Gentleman was acknowledged to be a powerful and graceful writer, a fine poet, and a born orator. His premature death is a severe loss to his Church and to the Press, and a subject of deep regret to the community at large.

## THE BACK RIVER TRAGEDY.

The terrible fire which occurred at Sault-au-Recollet, on the night of Saturday, the 4th inst., has created a deep impression throughout the country, on account of the mortality which it occasioned. The hotel of Narcisse Lajeunesse was destroyed and three persons perished—Rev. Father Murphy, Editor of the *True Witness*, Rev. Father Lynch, late of Newfoundland, and Madame Champagne, mother-in-law of Mr. Lajeunesse. It appears that in the course of the afternoon the Rev. Fathers Murphy and Lynch

called at the *True Witness* office for proofs, and stated that they were going for a drive. Their intention was to spend the Sunday at the Village of Ste. Thérèse. They arrived at the Hotel, put up their horse and ordered supper, and retired early. Madame Champagne also retired early. Madame Lajeunesse awakened her son at ten p. m., stating that there was a fire, and before he could dress the flames burst in his room, and he with difficulty dragged his mother through a window, and thence let her down to the street. Young Lajeunesse then tried to reach his grandmother, but without success. A fire engine belonging to the village was on hand, but only sent a sickly stream, and this soon stopped, as the valves became frozen. The origin of the fire is attributed to a gas-germinating lamp. A search was made for the remains of the three, which when collected were put into a

biscuit box. As young Lajeunesse passed the room where the priests slept, he heard them crawling about and gasping for breath. An inquest was held by the Coroner, but the result was not considered satisfactory—in so far as the real origin of the fire is concerned. A great deal of contradiction was likewise discernible among those who testified. The insurance companies, pushed by public opinion, have called for another investigation.

On Thursday, the 9th inst., a large number of persons drove out to Back River for the purpose of attending the removal of the remains from Sault-au-Recollet church to that of St. Bridget in this city, where the funeral ceremonies were to take place on the next day. The numbers that attended at this demonstration proved most unmistakably the deep feeling of regret which the terrible catastrophe had occasioned.

The mournful cortege slowly wound its way along Dorchester to Papineau road, through the Square into St. Mary Street, thence along Notre Dame street to Place d'Armes, turning into St. James street, through Victoria Square to St. Antoine, up Mountain and along Sherbrooke to Cote des Neiges road, reaching the Roman Catholic Cemetery about half-past one o'clock, when the coffin was consigned to the receiving vault to await interment in the spring.

Rev. D. J. LYNCH was a native of Ireland, and graduate of Maynooth College. After his ordination he went to St. John's, Newfoundland, where he ministered in the cathedral under Bishop Power, to whom he was related. From Newfoundland he went to New York on a special mission, and a short time ago came to Montreal, where he conducted the retreat at St. Bridget's church last week.



THE LATE REV. JAS. J. MURPHY.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY NOTMAN.

On the morning of the 10th inst., as early as seven o'clock, St. Bridget's Church and vicinity presented an exceedingly animated appearance from the large number of persons to be seen making their way to church to witness the closing ceremonies about to be performed for the souls of the deceased clergymen, and to take part in the funeral procession that was to show in some measure the esteem in which they were held by their fellow-citizens; and so quickly did the mourners congregate that long before the hour announced for the opening services several thousand persons had filed into the church, or stood, unable to gain admission, on the street, intent on taking some share in the obsequies. The remains of both clergymen, contained in one casket, were deposited, on Thursday afternoon, in the St. Bridget's Church, and the same elegant taste displayed in the church decorations succeeded even better in the floral offerings that adorned the casket.

Shortly before nine o'clock the choir commenced a solemn chant rendered with deep pathos, the hush that fell on those present showing the feelings uppermost in the popular mind, and more than one moistened eye betrayed the heartfelt emotion that would not be suppressed as some warm friend thought of the generous, manly, talented young gentlemen who so suddenly had been snatched from among us.

The funeral procession having formed, the coffin was placed in the hearse, passing through St. Bridget's Society, which opened ranks as it passed, each member holding a burning taper. Heading the procession were the flags of various Irish National Societies, furled and heavily draped in mourning; the hearse was next in order, and following it came the chief mourners, brothers of Father Murphy and others. St. Bridget's Society occupied the post of honor, being the leading society, and following it were St. Patrick's Benevolent, St. Ann's Temperance, Young Irishman's Literary and Benefit, Irish Catholic and Catholic Young Men's Societies, and a deputation of the Knights of St. Patrick from Quebec; then came a number of sleighs, most of them being occupied by two or more persons, many of them ladies—the whole forming a line more than a mile in length.