

more irreconcilable with Catholicism than the policy and principles of Cromwell and his Parliament. The two most powerful Empires in Europe, those of Germany and Russia, had broken off all diplomatic intercourse with him who was, in a very true sense, "the prisoner of the Vatican." Republican France, in the hands of Voltairian sceptics and radical revolutionists, was with difficulty withheld from breaking openly with the Pope. Spain was friendly, but powerless to help him; Austria, like Belgium and Portugal, was secretly ruled by these occult but powerful organizations, which gave the law to the President of the French Republic, as well as to the successor of Victor Emmanuel. Great Britain, which had efficiently aided in despoiling the Pope of his States, never had, since the reign of James II., sent an official representative to the Holy See; and the Republican Congress of the United States had, after our war, and forgetful of the thousands of Catholics who had died for the Union, suppressed the American Legation at the Vatican. It was an ungenerous and impolite act, which another Congress and President will not fail to undo in the near future.

But meanwhile Pius IX. died, seemingly abandoned by all the nations who could help him effectually, and given over to the absolute dominion of the power which had stripped him of everything save the precarious tenure of the Vatican and its garden, with the mockery of a sovereign title, and which at any time could seize the Vatican itself, and leave the Pope without a roof in Rome, or in all Italy, he could call his own.

It was dark indeed. And how and whence was the light to come amid this settled and ever-deepening gloom above St. Peter's and the venerable seat of an authority which had outlived that of the Cæsars, of Charlemagne, and the Germano-Roman Emperors who succeeded to his title?

The bright solitary star which, in the ancient family escutcheon of the Pecci, sheds so brilliant a radiance on the earth beneath, might, and doubtless did, to some persons appear an augury of coming dawn, of hope of better things for the Papacy, for Christianity itself.

But, leaving out of the question the prophecy and its suggestions, there is in the brief reign of Leo XIII. enough of splendid achievement to justify the pregnant words of the prediction, had it been authentic. Against all seeming hope, against all the most solemn utterances of political prophets in both hemispheres, the moral superiority which Leo XIII. established for himself by his noble character, by the firm but gentle dignity of his official letters, and by the incomparable eloquence and elevation of his solemn teachings addressed to the Universal Church, had disarmed prejudice and hostility. As we write it is hoped that Germany is again renewing with the Holy See the friendly relations of other time, repealing the oppressive laws enacted against Catholics, and paying in the eyes of the civilized world the most exalted homage to the personal character and sovereign rank of the Roman Pontiff. At the same time Russia, which had already made approaches towards conciliation, is said to be sending a special envoy to negotiate about the sad condition of Polish Catholics, and other difficult religious matters in the Empire.

Great as is this result, brilliant as is, assuredly, the light shed from the Chair of Peter during the eight years already passed of this Pontificate, the life of the man himself, from his childhood to his sixty-eighth year, when chosen to fill the place of Pius IX., is one long luminous track, marked at its every stage by the gentlest, noblest virtues, by all those qualities which endear a man to all who know and approach him, by those utterances and deeds, which all who value still what is fundamental in Christianity are sure to admire and to praise.

Thus the personage whom we present to the study and admiration of the reader is not merely a great man, a great Pope, a great and eloquent teacher of all Christians and all mankind; he was a good and a true man in every relation of life in which he was placed, a gentle, docile, loving son, a child and a boy pious and thoughtful beyond his years, but a bright, joyous, manly, generous boy. And all the sweet promises which blossomed forth in his boyhood and youth were realized in the rich fruit of maturer years.

It is only by looking well into the life of him who is now Leo XIII., at all its stages, that one sees how beautiful it is. His pure, gentle but erect figure is one Fra Angelico could have delighted to paint; his life would have been worthy of the pen which wrote the "Fioriti di San Francesco."—*Mgr. O'Reilly's Life of Leo XIII.*

MONTREAL GOSSIP.

Who among us has not pleasant recollections of that wonderful nursery classic, "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland"? How many of us, too, resemble Alice's curious collection of friends who ran races in a circle—not that like them we a win and all receive prizes. Oh, no! Indeed in the matter of prizes we often approach nearer to Alice herself, who had to put her hand in her own pocket before she was presented with an "elegant thimble." Honours are sometimes obtained in a like manner even in this enlightened city of ours—at least so it is whispered. But my thought of Alice came to me in connection with another episode of that inimitable book. When Alice grew so tall that she could no longer see her slipper, she decided to send it a letter addressed to the "care of Alice's Right Foot, Esq.," and so with our City Council which has at last awakened to the fact that Montreal is much too extensive for a large number of its streets to go any longer without name or direction. Consequently, we have been given a present out of our own coffers in the shape of blue enamelled tablets about two feet in length, with the names of the streets thereon in white letters. Long ago these streets showed their nomenclature by means of badly painted black and white boards, then somebody, like Artemus Ward's Betsey Jane, "reorganized" and the boards were removed, and the names of the streets painted on the glass of the corner lamp posts. When these gas lamps were superseded by electric light away went the lamp posts, names and all—and we have ever since in the matter of many of our best known, and what is worse, our least known thoroughfares, been walking "by faith and not by sight."

While seated at the breakfast table of a well known scientific in Montreal, one day last week, we were startled by a strange and rumbling sound which proceeded from a corner of the room between two coils of the hot water heating apparatus. The ladies of the party turned pale and trembled, the noise grew louder, a sort of knocking and thumping was heard, as if angry spirits were abroad. There was evidently a grave danger threatening, and word was sent to the coachman to go and investigate the furnace. Now, that functionary is not learned in hydraulics, nor yet in spiritualism, in fact his knowledge of spirits-and-water is much greater than his knowledge of either separately considered, so he could not penetrate the mystery of the knocking. Back came the message: "Please ma'am John can't find nothing wrong." Yet the noise waxed louder than ever until the room shook with its vibrations. The scientist who, like Charlotte in Thackeray's poem, had calmly

"Gone on cutting bread and butter,"

was at this juncture prevailed upon to go and see what was the matter. After a very few moments he returned with less determination in his expression than might have been expected:

"My dear, the noise is made by men who are nailing the names of the streets on both sides of the corner of the house!"

Ever since the days of the Tory Secretary of State, who had to get a map in order to know where Canada was situated we have been insulted, from time to time, in the leading English journals. The *Illustrated London News* and the *Graphic* take a particular delight in grossly caricaturing our country and all that appertains to it. The former, in its issue of the 28th ult., has two pictures which claim to represent "Winter in Canada," wherein Russian or Swedish sledges, with horse caparisoned in a style utterly unknown in our Dominion are portrayed as crossing the St. Lawrence. While as to the ice railway—well, such carriages and locomotives may possibly be used somewhere on the globe, but certainly not in Canada. I remember, a year or two ago, seeing in one of those papers a sketch of a Montreal toboggan slide in the height of the season. In the foreground were a few figures, copied, as to dress and detail, from one of the first Canadian Christmas cards issued some twelve or fourteen years ago, while, coming down the slide, in the leading toboggan, were *three squaws*! Then in this year's Christmas number of the *Illustrated London News*, "Christmas in the Old World" is portrayed by a scene of an English home of culture and refinement, while "Christmas in the New World" shows nothing better than a hunter dressed in skins, crouched over a camp fire, hobnobbing with an Indian! How is it that such ignorance pre-