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BANQUET TO EDWARD BLAKE

Important Speeches of Messrs.
 Redmond, Blake and T. P.
 O'Connor

London, July 28.—To-night the members of the Irish Party entertained Mr. E. Blake at a banquet in one of the dining rooms of the House of Commons, as a tribute to their appreciation of his magnificent services to the Irish cause. Mr. John E. Redmond, Chairman of the Party, presided.

The following cablegram was received: "Toronto, Ontario, to John Redmond, House of Commons, London—United Irish League, Ottawa, heartily join your honoring our own Edward Blake.—Freeland, Pres; Bagen, Sec.

Mr. John Redmond, who was received with cheers, said: I rise to perform one of the pleasantest duties that has fallen to my lot since I have occupied the position of Chairman of this Party. I rise for the purpose of proposing the toast of our guest, Mr. Blake (cheers). I do so with the feeling of the greatest pleasure, the greatest pride, and yet with some feelings of embarrassment. For me to have even the appearance of praising Mr. Blake would be almost an impertinence. Mr. Blake is a man who has filled one of the greatest positions open to any man of intellect in Canada. His record in that country is to this day one of the proudest possessions of that free and great community (cheers). Of the record, full of honor to Canada and to Mr. Blake, I won't presume to say anything except just this—He was all through his career in Canada an outspoken friend of the liberties of Ireland (cheers). I think it was in the year 1882, before many in this room were in political life in Ireland at all, certainly before they were in a prominent position in political life in Ireland, he moved a resolution in favor of Home Rule in the Dominion Parliament, and he did it in peculiar circumstances, because in doing so he made great sacrifices—that is, to say, he willingly made sacrifice by raising against himself prejudices in many quarters for the sake of the land of his fathers, whose liberties he was anxious to achieve (cheers). Some of the greatest speeches ever made on the subject of Irish self-government were those delivered by Mr. Blake in the Canadian Parliament, and they were made by him at a time when he had no idea probably that he ever would be taking part in the fight for Home Rule in this country. Now the second thing I want to say about Mr. Blake's career is that to give to the service of Ireland all the weight of his ideas, his peerless gifts of eloquence, his mature judgment, and his experience, which have been so invaluable to us in recent years (cheers). In so doing, gentlemen, he conferred a great distinction upon the Irish Party, and a great honor upon Ireland; but he did more. I am not likely to forget that Mr. Blake came to this country at a period of exceptional difficulty and danger to the Irish cause, whose life he did not come here as a fair weather friend—he came in at a time of stress and storm. When he came here he found a seething tumult from end to end of Ireland. A great tragedy had taken place—a great leader—one of the greatest leaders who had ever appeared on the Parliamentary stage since the Union (cheers)—had just disappeared, and as was natural, judging human nature as it is, his disappearance had led to a political earthquake in Ireland (hear, hear). It was into such a scene that Mr.

Blake came. Into the midst of this heated, personal controversy, I may be allowed to say, he brought an unquestioned impartiality, a transparent disinterestedness, and a calm judgment, which were absolutely invaluable to Ireland at the time, which, in the end, contributed far more than he thought the Irish people entirely realized to the reunion which was brought about (cheers), and to-day in the councils of the Irish Party Mr. Blake's wisdom and foresight are perhaps our most valuable asset. In our debates he confers distinction upon every course that he advocates, and, finally, he has found his way into the affections of the Irish Party (loud cheers). Ireland is proud of Mr. Blake, and the Party is proud of him (cheers). Every man in the Party has learned to love him, and I will be conveying your sentiments when I say that we wish him long life and happiness, and hope that he may live to work for Ireland amongst the colleagues who have grown not only to respect and love him until his eyes have seen the triumph of the cause to which he is devoted (cheers).

Mr. Blake, who was received with cheers, said: Mr. Chairman, and kind and dear friends and comrades, present and absent, I regard what has happened now as the culminating proof of the kindness and generosity of heart which you and the Irish people have exhibited towards me ever since I came amongst you. You, Mr. Redmond, have alluded to my political career on the other side of the Atlantic. I have spent twenty-five years of my life in the service of my native country, and it happened by stress of circumstances that I occupied for a time the position in the Dominion Parliament of leadership of a party. During that time I was supported with unanimity and loyalty beyond my deserts and I was also the recipient of testimonials from my colleagues and from the public, but those testimonials of devotion differed from ours. They were associated with a party cause. What makes this testimonial of yours ever so much more precious to me is that I come not here as a leader but as a desiring to occupy the place of one of the rank and file of the Party (cheers). I receive this kindness at your hands as one of yourselves (hear, hear). I came here not only absolutely desirous of serving in the ranks, but with the conscientious conviction that any other suggestion was absurdly impossible. I knew the position in Ireland. I knew something, by reputation and otherwise, of the men who were here. I knew where my place was, and must be, and I am glad to say that it was the place where I longed to be, amongst the rank and file, following loyally the chief of the Party, whoever he might be, and doing my best to secure the appointment of the best man to lead, and when he was appointed, to do my best to make his leadership a success (cheers). And it is, above all, to a private in the ranks that you, of the rank and file, under the leadership of our distinguished chairman, have offered this which I regard as an unexampled compliment. I rejoice to hear those words, which I believe I might have the happiness to hear from Mr. Redmond—the expression of friendship between us (cheers). Our friendship dates from the beginning, and it has had its foundation in a concurrence of sentiment in politics. "Idem velle, idem sentire, eadem sententia de republica, ea demum firma amicitia est." But something more is wanted to make the friendship that touches the heart, as well as the respect and esteem and confidence, that appeal to the more intellectual side of our nature. It is that which I cherish most, and which you tell me that I have received in your comradeship (cheers). Politics is a suspicious world. Party politics is even a suspicious world in some quarters. But noble politics, to be the highest and noblest pursuit of true citizens in a free land (cheers), and I hold it to be a still higher and nobler pursuit when it is the pursuit of a citizen in a subjugated land asserting the freedom of his country, and that is our destiny (cheers). We from the necessities of the case in this great assembly, stand apart. We do not regret that we stand apart. We sit by our own will perpetually in what are called the cold shades of opposition. We have nothing whatever except that which is worth everything to animate us except the pure aspiration to restore the liberties of our country (cheers). We are estranged, and so long as this island persists in her course of declining us our constitutional freedom we must remain estranged from the remainder of this assembly. We are here as strangers in a strange place (cheers), because our National aspirations are as yet ignored by the majority of the assembly, and therefore our position in this respect distinctive and peculiar. We submit ourselves to a severe discipline, provided by the experience of many years in the struggle in which we are engaged, subjecting all individual opinion to the views of the majority of the party. That is an abnormal situation to which in my own country, free, and therefore not requiring that discipline, I should never submit. But I came here knowing the obligation, and convinced of its necessity in the circumstances in which we are, and I have never found the slightest difficulty in complying loyally with it (cheers). There is, therefore, in the abnormal situation one safeguard for individual judgment and one safety valve for individual dissent—namely, the agreement that before a decision is taken there shall be the fullest and freest discussion in the councils of the Party, so that each man, no matter what his position may be in the Party, has an equal right to express his opinion in order to vindicate his views, to hear what is to be said upon the other side, and if that is done he may all the more freely and with the better conscience agree to the judgment of an instructed majority—of a majority instructed, at any rate, into what is to be said

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STRATFORD

Mr. Frank J. Canty, son of the late J. H. Canty, railway contractor, formerly of this city, is now permanently located in Chicago and is now the leading attorney for the London Guarantee and Accident Co. Mr. Canty many years ago was a pupil of the Stratford Collegiate Institute, when he gained distinction for his cleverness. His many Stratford friends will be glad to hear he is well and prosperous.

The Stratford Herald excursion to Detroit recently was a grand success both socially and financially. The attendance was large and everything was done to meet the wishes of the patrons of this annual affair, which is always looked forward to with a wonderful amount of pleasure and satisfaction.

Mr. C. F. Bielman, the general traffic manager of the White Star Line, also deserves special mention for the interest and courtesy shown to the proprietors of the Stratford Herald and others interested in this and other pleasure trips. The White Star Line of steamers are of a high class and are managed by careful and well-instructed employees, hence it is that this company succeed in securing a large public patronage.

Mr. J. P. Phippen, artistic photographer of Detroit, is at present in the city taking views of our prominent buildings. He is meeting with good success and turns out the best that can be produced.

Mr. Joseph Oullette of Detroit, Mich., is the guest of his aunt, Mrs. E. J. Kneiff, for a few weeks.

Miss Emma Kneiff is on a two months' holiday trip to Detroit and points west.

Miss Coyle of Detroit, Mich., is a guest of her sister, Miss Coyle.

Before another issue of this paper the "Summer Fair" will be over. On Tuesday and Wednesday, Aug. 16 and 17, are two days set apart for this purpose, to be given in connection with St. Joseph's Church, this city, in the Stratford skating rink. The fair will be an attraction of merit, and should be well attended, supper being served each evening.

The pastor, Rev. Charles E. McGillis, is managing this undertaking, which is itself a guarantee that it will be a success. Every person interested in the welfare of the church and the Catholic people of Stratford should attend the numerous attractions, and gifts that will be secured by the lucky ones will be a handsome recompense for the money invested and the pleasure and privilege of an attendance. Every person go and help to fill the cash box.

C. M. B. A. CONVENTION

Matters Calling for Consideration at the Approaching Convention

Editor Catholic Register:

Sir,—The Catholic Mutual Benefit Association holds its triennial convention in Toronto in a couple of weeks. This convention is for the consideration of matters in the interest of the association and should bear good fruit if there is general and intelligent participation in the discussion of the subjects introduced. The trouble at conventions hitherto has been that a few, principally old or loquacious members, have monopolized the speaking and thus prevented just as sensible, if more modest, delegates from taking part in discussions and giving the convention the benefit of their observation and experience. Indeed, there has been heretofore not only a monopoly of debate but a monopoly of office. Members at a distance, those who have not been delegates and have not attended these conventions, have been edified(?) by reading reports of speeches by men who have figured in the same role since conventions were first held, and have occasionally, with slight variations, seen the same old names in the list of officers. This is not as it should be, and if the Catholic Mutual Benefit Association is to progress and exhibit elements of permanency there will be a radical reform in the ancient programme at conventions and a few new members will be honored with some of the important offices.

If there is not the infusion of new blood into the directorate there is grave danger of the association ultimately falling into clique or cabal government and when that comes the inglorious end of our present beloved C.M.B.A. is not far off. Why should there be a monopoly of office in this organization any more than in any well conducted financial institution in the land? Why should not the principal offices be passed around and made clear and emphatic that the highest position is within the reach of the least urgent and significant if intelligent and capable, delegate from the remotest branch? I hear it said and the cutting remark is not without warrant, that at present cheery politicians control the councils of the C.M.B.A., and critics follow up this avowal with prophecy of disaster to any institution managed by politicians. The reference is of course to both sides of politics, for both parties figure in the councils of the C.M.B.A. It is no wonder that already we hear of the Association being used and manipulated to further the selfish ends and ambitions of certain cheery and aggressive politicians.

If the C.M.B.A. ever becomes distinctly tainted with politics its dissolution it will be. There is no need of such a development, but there is serious danger of such, if a half is not at once called to methods which have unfortunately prevailed at previous conventions.

Even the facile and flippant politician can dilate refreshingly on the glorious objects of our institution and its absolutely non-political character, but the pity of it is that these windy deliverances amount to little and may, indeed, be crafty subtleties to lull the unwary into confident security.

I do hope that at the approaching convention the C.M.B.A. ship will sail proudly and triumphantly into placid and navigable waters and will bid adieu forever to the present menacing rocks and sandbanks.

It is to be hoped that the present system of assessment will be altered and improved. Special assessments which are this year bobbing up almost every month, are the bane of the C.M.B.A., are growing in unpopularity and may be our ruin if we do not abolish them. The substitution of a more suitable system of assessment should be easy. In my opinion there should be twelve fixed monthly assessments, which should be sufficiently large to meet all the likely liabilities of the association. The special assessment has never been popular and I know of several branches which this year have lost members because of the appearance of a special assessment which they did not expect and which they had been led to believe would never be made. For instance, the special assessment in April, following the regular double header in March, was not looked for, though members need not be amazed at anything in future, for later the double-header in July was preceded by a special in June and we have just been advised by the Grand Secretary that the same double-header is followed by another special in August. This sandwiching of the

July double-header is of course necessary in order to meet the obligations of the association, but the fact does not lessen its unpopularity and is most assuredly a poor argument to present to a candidate for membership. The officers, more particularly the financial secretaries of local branches, know what a nuisance the special assessment is and they will join with me in the earnest hope that it will be only a remembered nightmare after the approaching convention.

My letter grows long, but I beg a few lines on the Canadian, the official organ of the C.M.B.A. Some time ago one of your correspondents directed attention to the unpractical issue of this monthly. One of the arguments for its establishment was that its publication would save branches the trouble and expense of notifying members of the amount of their assessment every month. Will any one pretend to say that it fills this bill? Its issuance is utterly irregular and unreliable and frequently The Canadian for one month reaches subscribers about the middle of the next! The result is that branches do not receive the assessments from many of their members for the latter, relying on the Canadian for information, do not know whether they should send the regular assessment or a special along with it and the grand outcome is delinquency of members and confusion at the head offices of the branches.

The Canadian is published at considerable expense and there is no reason under the sun why it should not be printed and mailed promptly at the beginning of each month. This apparently cannot be done under the present management, which seems to have become hardened in delinquency, and the continued publication of The Canadian should be seriously debated at the coming convention. The July publication of the organ, which reached members when August was a week old, is rather ludicrous reading in some of its luminous pages. The dry and stereotyped resolutions of condolence read alright, and would be as instructive and appropriate if published a year hence, but the reader is rather at sea in perusing that Hon. Mr. Latchford will sail for the Old Country in a few days, but will return in time for the C.M.B.A. convention. After considerable perplexity it at last dawned upon him that, though he is reading The Canadian in the first week of August, it is dated the first week in July, and that the Minister of Public Works has already been enjoying himself for several weeks in the land of his forefathers.

This spasmodic issue of The Canadian is a reflection on the C.M.B.A., but is not, I hope, a fair index of general managerial talent. The convention should certainly either resolve to discontinue the publication of this organ or take some action to ensure its prompt publication in future. At present branches derive little or no benefit from it from a business point. I would whisper in the ear of its editor the wisdom of relegating the lugubrious resolutions of condolence to the oblivion to which he has resolved to consign all resolutions forwarded to him. The resolutions are sad literature and we have in all conscience seen a surfeit of them in The Canadian. The explanation for the delay in the publication of the July Canadian is childish and unbusinesslike. The management should have been prepared for the very contingency for which they apologize. The convention should also consider whether the present printing office is entitled to a continued monopoly of all the C.M.B.A. printing at its own glittering rates. There are other Catholic printing offices in Canada and there is no reason why one particular member should grow fat and rich through continued hawking in C.M.B.A. sunshine. I favor passing around the patronage, but if this cannot be done the work should be thrown open to tender. Let there be open competition and the C.M.B.A. will save thousands of dollars annually. I trust some delegate will have the courage to bring this question before the convention.

There are other matters, such as the contradictory and anomalous headship, vibrating between Kingston and London, which demand notice, but this letter is already too long.

CHANCELLOR.

Diocese of Peterborough

The new St. Patrick's church was opened and blessed by His Lordship Bishop O'Connor of Peterborough, on Sunday, July 24th. High Mass was sung by the pastor, Rev. Father Fleming. Concone's Mass was rendered by the choir under the direction of Mrs. F. H. Gallagher. At the offertory Miss Annie Madden of Orillia, sang "Mercedante's" Salve Maria. The soloists during the Mass were Miss Agnes McGill, Peterburgh, Pa., and Messrs. McConkey of Kearney and Madden of Brule Lake. At the conclusion of Mass a large number of candidates received the Sacrament of Confirmation. Addresses were read by Miss Munn and Mr. T. H. Gallagher on behalf of the congregation and Altar Society, and presented to Father Fleming, who was leaving for his old home in Newfoundland. At the evening service His Lordship delivered a most eloquent sermon on the Catholic Church and its doctrines. The altar looked beautiful with its numerous cut flowers and colored floats.

PERSONAL

Mr. W. Lahane of Downeyville and Mr. M. H. Lahane of Hamilton, cousins of Sister Philomena, who died last week at the House of Providence, were in the city in attendance at the funeral.

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