Men I Have Seen and Heard.

.....By a Veteran Scribbler.....

"Seize thy pencil, child of art;
Fame and fortune brighten o'er thee;
Great thy hand and great thy heart;
If well thou do'st the work before thee."

When Hogan, the Irish sculptor, was about to commence his famous statue of O'Connell, it was thus Thomas Davis opened his poetic address to the artist. Great, indeed, would be the hand, and great the heart, and the art of the one, who, with the materials at my disposal, could chisel out a living image of the subject of this sketch. It is not always given the writer to have themes that lend wings to his fancy or impart pulsations of a thrilling nature to his heart; nor is it every day that he is called upon to make a study of a life that can be characterized by no humbler term than the word grand. I feel that there is a certain amount of temerity attached to my undertaking, when, with the very short experience I had of the man, I attempt to recall the great and leading traits of the most noteworthy pastor of St. Patrick's—Father Dowd. But I feel confident that whatever is lacking in any imperfect portrayal, will be supplied in a most easy and ready manner by the readers, the vast majority of whom knew him longer than I did and had more occasions than ever fell to my lot to learn how truly great he was—a greatness that sprang from the most life-imparting source, that of deep humility.

I am not going to furnish a biographical sketch of Father Dowd; that has yet to be written, and by some pen far more able than the one I wield. No more am I going to trace the story of his pastorate, the monuments of which stand to-day, and will stand for generations to come, as the immutable evidences of his zeal, his perseverance, his ability, and his self-sacrifice. Nor will I try to recall any of his special works or words, for when I knew him his greatest works had been performed and his most inspiring words had been spoken—he was, to use his own phrase, "already drowsy for the long repose," and the reward of his labors was almost within reach of his hand. While thus enumerating what I do not propose doing, I may as well add that I will not make any effort to relate the influence which he exercised upon both men and measures during his time. Whenever the social, the political, the industrial and the educational history of Canada is written, the historian, if just, will have to rank amongst the greater influences for good in every sphere, that which was wielded by Father Dowd. I have thus, you may say, left myself but little scope, not so; the field is still vast, its horizons recede beyond my power to touch them, and its surface presents peaceful undulations, fertile and smiling valleys, as well as sublime and snow-capped summits that, in such a hurried excursion, we could never hope to explore, nor to sufficiently admire.

As memory conjures up the form, the features and the expression of Father Lowd, I am almost awed into silence and I fear to attempt any words of eulogy. Were he alive today, and were I in his presence, no matter how strongly I might feel the justice of my tribute, that look, so well remembered, would suffice to freeze the words upon my lips. He had such a horror of all flattery, such an innate dislike for praise, such a dread of aught that might endanger the sentiment of humility, that one would hesitate before telling him, face to face, how good he was and how truly great. But, today, unhappily he is not before me, nor is he in a sphere where either censure or praise can affect him; hence it is that I boldly proclaim him an ideal pastor—the "Sacerdos Magnus" of the Holy Scriptures. He was more, for, as far as the parish which he might justly be said to have built up, and to have guided through the most critical period in the history of the Irish Catholics of Montreal, he was a perfect example of the "Soggarth Aroon." In these two titles do I find expressed the great leading characteristics of Father Dowd. As far as the Church is concerned he was "a great priest," as far as regards the Irish people in particular, he was a beloved priest."

Beneath a bust of Sir Christopher Wren, the architect of St. Paul's, London, is the inscription: "If you seek his monument, look around you." Should a stranger, knowing the history of the Irish Catholic people of Montreal, ask us where he is to find a fitting monument to Father Dowd, we need but answer, "Look around you." Let him stand upon the square in front of the great Irish temple, and gaze up at that magnificent edifice, then glance beside it at the orphange, or across the street at St. Patrick's Academy, or to the left at St. Bridget's home, and he will behold some of the material results of Father Dowd's life-labor. Let him enter that Church on a Sunday, when its seats and aisles are thronged with devout and silent worshippers, and, if it be given to him, let him glance down into the hearts of the people—there again will he behold embalmed in those shrines of flesh and blood the venerated image of the great and good pastor whom the older ones had learned to love and whom the younger ones have been taught to revere as a glorious memory. His monument is everywhere in the vast city of Montreal, for time was when his parish covered almost the entire area of the city. But it is not of his monument I would write, but of the man himself.

My work is to tell, in my more or less perfect style, about men whom I have seen and heard. I have both seen and heard Father Dowd. It seems to me unnecessary to recall his personal appearance; much less so to dwell upon his manner of speech. All who have sat under the pulpit in St. Patrick's during the years of his pastoral charge require no such descriptions at my hand; and any who have never been privileged to see or hear him could never glean from my words any true idea of the man. So frequently was his imposing form to be seen in that pulpit and so varied the subjects upon which he instructed his people that I would find it very difficult to select any special occasion as an illustration.

However, I will recall one special period of the year when Father Dowd was always expected to preach, and to which every person looked forward as a red-letter day in the devotional annals of the congregation. The first day of the year, when a two-fold celebration takes place, that which belongs to the world and that which pertains to the Church, always beheld Father Dowd in the pulpit. He had much to say, on such occasions. Rarely was ever the mutual attachment and kindly association that should exist between pastor and flock more perfectly illustrated than in the relations that existed between Father Dowd and the members of St. Patrick's congregation. It was one New Year's Day, the strong clear-cut thoughtful features of Father Dowd were framed in the pulpit of St. Patrick's. Below was a church filled to its utmost capacity. A silence, born of reverence for the sacred place and expectancy regarding the words about to be spoken, reigned throughout the vast edifice. That powerful, yet well modulated voice—a little deteriorated by years of preaching, a little choked by deep stirring emotions — proclaimed a greeting to all present. Good wishes for a happy and a holy New Year came in smooth and simple rhythme from the priestly lips of the aged pastor. Then commenced the annual review of the twelve months just elapsed. The pews that had their empty seats, the corners of the cemetery that were occupied by newly-dug graves, the homes that had their vacant chairs, were all recalled. Words of regret for the departed and prayers for their repose, words of sympathy and consolation for the living. Then the inevitable charge to the young men on the subject of temperance. What a temperance advocate he was! He detested drink, not only on account of the miseries which it entailed, but because of the moral degradation which it brought about. Then would he tell of all successes achieved and obstacles overcome during the year that had elapsed. In dealing with every point be it past, present, or future, he had a word or a phrase that remained stereotyped upon the minds of the people, and throughout the whole year these sayings became household words, going from lip to lip, and being so frequently repeated that they produced of their accord the widespread effects that he desired.

How he could strike terror into the heart of the delinquent! Yet, how he could inspire the souls of the most timid children with love, confidence and joyousness! He was truly a father, for paternal were his admonitions, while magnetic to draw to him were the tendrils of his heart. He was the real good shepherd, after the model of his Master, for he could call each one of his flock by name, and enter into the sentiments of every one, from the aged pillar of the Church down to the tiny school girl. It was these qualities and characteristics that constituted Father Dowd a unique character on the broad stage of this city's history. He was associated with every improvement and advancement, not only in St. Patrick's, but in all the city, for over a third of a century, and he died, as he had lived, respected, honored and beloved by all.

THE SUCCESS OF LITTLE MEN.

"I sometimes think the physically small man has an advantage in public life," said Secretary of the Treasury Lyman J. Gage to one of his assistants, who claimed that short stature was a handicap in the race of life. "There is a glamour or romance about the little fellow who succeeds," continued the secretary, "that attracts attention and gives him a reputation. On the whole, I believe the man of diminutive size is more effective than the physically perfect man of imposing presence. The little fellow is more aggressive and self-assertive because he has not the adventitious aid of bodily beauty and favor. There are lots of big little men in public life and history abounds in small celebrities."

This statement was made partly to encourage Assistant Secretary Allee, who is disposed to regard an imposing presence as necessary to full success and who sometimes regrets that his five feet five cannot be stretched half a cubit. But the secretary's long experience convinces him that bodily height, breadth and depth do not insure success in life. He has observed that spirit and ability bring the man of small physical size into prominence.

It may be that Secretary Gage, in eulogizing the small man, had in mind, as an illustration of what the little fellows can do, the record of Mr. James H. Eckels, who was a fellow-townsman of Mr. Gage and comptroller of the Currency under President Cleveland. Shortly after Mr. Eckels assumed office in the Treasury he was invited to deliver a lecture before one of the law classes in Columbia University. He was not recognized when he repaired to the hall and modestly took a back seat, where he was the object of some curious scrutiny on the part of the students, who supposed him to be a young interloper—a stranger who had simply wandered into the classroom.

The professor in charge that evening expressed regret that the speaker for the occasion, Comptroller Eckels, had not put in an appearance. The stranger in the back row arose and announced that he was Mr. Eckels. All eyes were then riveted upon the slight, boyish figure and youthful face, innocent of beard. Disappointment was written on every face, including that of the professor, but when the "boy," as he appeared, reached the platform and began his masterly address, disappointment gave way to enthusiasm, and one of the biggest brains in President Cleveland's Administration received a public introduction.

The physical giant is not met with very frequently in national affairs, now that Thomas B. Reed, of Maine, has retired from public life. Outside of the Supreme Court, where master minds are carried in giant bodies by such men as Justices Gray, Harlan and White, few of the controlling spirits who are leaving an impress on history are above medium height or weight, and many of the most prominent are far below the average-sized man. Even the Supreme Court is presided over by a man small in stature and slight of figure. Melville W. Fuller, Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, is a pygmy compared with Associate Justice Gray, who sits at his immediate left on the bench. Justice McKenna, the latest appointee to the bench, is small in stature.

Measured by ordinary standards the President of the United States is a small man physically, but there is no doubt of his having achieved great success and having won a high place in the history of the country and of the world. He is hardly up to what is called medium height. He has associated with him a number of big little men.

Honorable John Hay, Secretary of State, ex-Ambassador to England, and known all the world over as a poet and author, started in life with the supposed handicap of a slight body and undersized figure. Secretary of the Navy Long is below the standard height, and Postmaster-General Smith is barely up to the medium line. The present Attorney-General, Mr. Philander C. Knox, cannot boast of many inches, but his success where mentality is potent was long ago achieved.

President McKinley's last Republican predecessor, the late General Harrison, was familiarly known as "Little Ben." He had large men in his Cabinet, but never showed to disadvantage, even alongside the talented Blaine, who was above the average size and of very graceful and imposing presence.

In Congress the little men often attract the most attention. Within the past quarter of a century many statesmen of insignificant bodily stature have made their names known from one end of the land to the other. Less than a decade ago few men were more prominent than the doughty little Democratic leader, William L. Wilson, afterward Postmaster-General. When the tariff bill bearing his name passed the House he was caught up and carried on the shoulders of enthusiastic colleagues, among them Mr. William J. Bryan. His feather weight made this demonstration easy. There are those in Congress who still remember the diminutive Alexander Hamilton Stephens, of Georgia, whose great intellect made him one of the South's greatest men.

To-day in the House the homely old adage that "valuable goods are put up in small packages" is verified when Representative John Dalzell, of Pennsylvania, or "Uncle Joe" Cannon, of Illinois, appear on the floor. The great leaders in Congress are not usually sons of Anak. Among other big little men may be noted Admiral Dewey and General Fred Funston, both of whom have made considerable noise in the world. Then there is "Little Joe" Wheeler. United States Treasurer Roberts is so short that when he sits in an ordinary office chair his feet do not touch the floor. The list might be extended indefinitely to prove that towering form and broad shoulders are not essential to success.—J. S. Henry, in the Saturday Evening Post, Philadelphia.

AMERICAN DEPARTMENT STORES.

BIG BUSINESS.—Harlow N. Higgersbotham contributes an article to the "Saturday Evening Post," of Philadelphia, on the above subject. To show the magnitude and the methods of these mammoth commercial enterprises we take the following extract from the article:—

If the counters in Chicago's largest store of this kind were placed end to end they would make a causeway six miles long. Were the delivery waggons and teams of this institution drawn up in marching order they would completely surround an entire city square. A careful estimate of the number of persons entering this place during its banner day of trade is 225,000. This means, roughly speaking, that the crowd which passed under this roof on a single day's traffic more than equaled the entire population of Louisville, Minneapolis or Jersey City, none of which is credited with more than 207,000 inhabitants.

The average force of employees maintained by an institution of this sile is about 3,300, but this brigade is increased to 4,000 to meet the demands of a prosperous holiday trade.

An ingenious and interesting method of placing the magnitude of this establishment within the grasp of the reader is to compare its trade with the total retail traffic of a provincial city or town. A comparison of this kind indicates that, according to the normal distribution of trade, the business transacted by the largest department store of the West would equal all the retail traffic done by a city of about 80,000 inhabitants.

Another way of bringing the bigness of the department store within the realization of the reader is by reference to the size of its purchases. One store in Chicago bought in one bill a stock of granite up into a special train. Another of these great institutions bought a train-load of shirt-waists on a single order. Books are handled in quantities which are almost beyond comprehension. One department store bought in one invoice 100,000 volumes of standard works of fiction—and sold them, too! It is not unusual for any of these great concerns to place a single import order for $50,000 worth of goods, and often this is far exceeded.

One Chicago department store in the past year made almost four million deliveries. The number of packages of merchandise thus handled would probably triple this figure, as comparatively few patrons purchase a single article at one time, while many a suburban delivery waggon leaves a score of parcels at a house at the same time.

To accomplish this task of distributing the merchandise sold and not taken from the store by the hand of the purchaser requires a steady force of about one hundred double waggons and forty single, and four hundred horses. This delivery contingent is materially increased during the days of holiday traffic, when a cavalcade of heavy "bulk waggons" and drays, owned by private teamsters, is employed. Each waggon has a driver and a delivery boy, and those traveling in the more thinly populated districts have an extra boy to facilitate the process of distribution.

VOLUME OF TRADE.—In almost any line of staple goods the volume of a day's sales in a metropolitan department store is well calculated to test the credulity of the uninitiated. Think of retailing more than twenty tons of sugar in one "dept" in a single day. The record, however, has been made and the sales were mainly in "dollar lots." The physical task of handling and weighing up this quantity of sugar in comparatively small packages is tiresome to contemplate, and it would have been scarcely possible had it not been for the great automatic scales with which the sugar department is equipped. Suppose the rate at which this staple is retailed to be nineteen pounds for a dollar. The scales are adjusted at that weight. The clerk presses a button and a volume of sugar weighing exactly nineteen pounds is dropped into a paper bag below the spout leading from the hopper. When the grocery department of a big store like the leading ones of New York and Chicago institute a special sale of hams it is not unusual to dispose of 5,000 of them in a day.

Many articles entirely unknown to the traffic of the larger stores of a provincial city are handled by these monster department establishments in surprising quantities. Take the sprightly article of live frogs as an example of this phase of trade in lines not thought of by the average person. Over the counter of a Chicago department store three thousand dozen of these creatures were sold in one day for "live bait."

SENSATIONAL BARGAINS.—Beyond all question, however, the strangest "bargain sale" ever held by a department store was that designed to justify the right of this form of enterprise to exist. Although the simple statement of this picturesque proceeding reads like an Oriental fable, the facts are thoroughly authenticated and beyond challenge.

Owing to the inroads made by the department stores upon the business of small shopkeepers and merchants, strong influence was brought to bear upon the legislators at Springfield, Illinois, to pass a law which should make it illegal for a merchant to sell butter and dress goods, for example, from the same store. Proprietors of department stores declined to oppose this legislation, resting in confidence on the assurance of their legal advisers that such a law would be absolutely unconstitutional. One of the strongest arguments advanced for the necessity of such legislation for the protection of the smaller and specialized merchants was the allegation that the department stores sold goods below cost and thus made a competition which could not be met except by institutions of enormous capital and large facilities. The result of this argument admirably illustrates what I have said regarding the dash and audacity typical of the methods of these mammoth retail establishments.

When debate on this measure was at its height in the legislature, and local feeling was strong, the city of Chicago was one morning astonished to read that on the following day one of the department stores would sell gold five-dollar pieces for $4.75 and silver dollars for ninety cents—one coin to each person who presented the even change at the specie bargain-counter window. The advertisement also stated that this special sale was given for the purpose of furnishing positive proof that at least one department store sold goods for less than cost. Long before the store doors were opend on the day of the specie sale a long line of waiting customers was formed in the street, winding well around the block and requiring special police protection and attention. This strange procession was unbroken from morning until the door closed at night, and it reached from the street to the top of a spiral staircase, where a young woman sat with great heaps and columns of bright new gold half-eagles and silver dollars arranged within reach. All day she stood at her post and handled out the glittering coins as fast as she could receive and count the money paid in through the little window. Even the formality of making a sales ticket for each purchase was dispensed with.

The public had no scruple about making the most of this novel opportunity to buy gold half-eagles and silver dollars at a discount. Men, women and children of all classes took their places in the eager line—and took them repeatedly when not identified and driven back as having been at the desk before that day. Thrifty parents with large families were not content to bring all their own children who were tall enough, by hard stretching! to reach up to the cash window, but they borrowed their neighbors' children and divided the spoils.

Although the direct loss upon the coins thus sold amounted to more than $5,000 the novel experiment was deemed a success. Much of the money thus brought into the store was left there for goods in other departments. Above all, however, the nerve, resource and dash of the modern department store were fully demonstrated, and the issue of selling below cost was settled with a boldness which won the admiration of the entire public and brought an immense amount of free advertising. It is safe to say that, no matter to what curious extremes the bargain sale may be carried, it will never surpass in novelty or picturesqueness the famous discount sale of gold half-eagles and silver dollars.

SIGNS OF CATHOLIC PROGRESS.

A NEW SEMINARY in Hartford is to be dedicated Aug. 15.

ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, (Magyar), McKeesport, Penn., is to be dedicated Aug. 25.

NEW CHURCHES. — The corner-stone of St. Mary's new church, Fond du Lac, Wis., was laid by Archbishop Katzer July 7.

SISTERS OF MERCY.—The corner-stone of the new convent and mother-house of the Sisters of Mercy in Milwaukee was laid July 19.

HOME FOR THE AGED.—The formal opening of the new Home for the Aged, New Haven, Conn., in charge of the Little Sisters of the Poor, took place July 16.

POLISH NUNS.— Land has been bought at Stevens Point, Wis., and some immense buildings are to be built there as a mother-house for Sisters speaking the Polish language in Wisconsin, Michigan and Illinois.

AN HOSPITAL.—At New Albany, Indiana, July 7, the corner-stone of a new hospital, to be known as St. Edward's, was laid by Bishop O'Donaghue, of Indianapolis. It will be in charge of the Sisters of St. Francis, and will be "free for the use of all who are distressed, regardless of creed or color."

A NOTABLE JUBILEE. — The priests of the diocese of St. Paul celebrated the golden jubilee of the diocese on the 2nd inst. by subscribing $85,000 for the preparatory seminary recently instituted by Archbishop Ireland. The priests of this diocese will soon show what they can do by raising $100,000 for the new Cathedral.

IN AFRICA.—Thirty years ago, Lagos, on the west coast of Africa, could scarcely number 20 Catholic people. Now it contains 6,000 African Catholic laymen, two large churches, four schools and a high school. So unhealthy for Europeans is the locality, however, that the Lagos cemetery already contains the graves of some forty priests and nuns who have laid down their lives in effort to convert the natives.

NON-CATHOLIC MISSIONS. — Last week, at the Paulists' missionary house, Winchester, Tenn., a missionary conference of three days was held, when all missionaries whose special work it is to preach to non-Catholics, held a meeting for the purpose of formulating plans to develop the work more thoroughly. Among the topics discussed were missions among colored people, and the South as a field for making converts.

If we could only realize what the Sacred Heart has prepared for those who love Him, the abundant gifts and graces that are poured out on those who practise this devotion, then we would enter more fully into this devotion; we would not allow a day to pass without renewing our consecration, and striving to do something for the spread of the devotion.

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