

at His Grace's invitation, from Montreal, and opened a home for girls, which is intended to be the beginning of an important and extensive institution.

All the buildings mentioned above are within the limits of the City of Halifax, but the sphere of activity has extended to all the eleven counties over which His Grace's direct jurisdiction extends. In those counties twelve new churches have been erected, most of them handsome buildings, and some of them expensive. A thirteenth is now building at Dartmouth. Fifteen glebe-houses have also been erected, and a considerable quantity of real estate has been acquired for church purposes. A college, intended especially for French-speaking Acadian students, has been established at Church Point, in the district of Clare, in the County of Digby. This institution is under the charge of a colony of Eudist Fathers, from Angers in France. An academy for girls, under the care of the Sisters of Charity, has also been opened at Bermuda during the present year. As if to show that he had not ceased to combine in a remarkable and most unusual degree the qualities of a man of books with those of a man of action, Archbishop O'Brien gave to the press in 1890, "Aminta," a drama in blank verse. No reference has been made, in the foregoing imperfect record of His Grace's work during the past ten years, to his exemplary discharge of what may be called the routine duties of his high office, to the pastoral visitations and letters, and the many spoken addresses delivered to various sections of his scattered flock; and nothing has been said of his numerous public utterances, of a non-official character, through the press and from the platform; but the record as given is enough to stamp the Archbishop as a man of wonderful energy and great business capacity. Our admiration must be increased when we know that it is the record of one whose bodily health is never robust, and who, during most of the period which it covers, has been under medical treatment.

The churches, schools, glebe-houses and other buildings erected and the various properties acquired for church purposes speak for themselves as to the character of what may be called the material activity of Archbishop O'Brien. Of the results of his intellectual energy, those who have not read or heard his published writings or utterances will be able to judge only after some account of them, which on the present occasion must needs be brief and somewhat superficial. His earliest, and in some respects most important work, is the "Philosophy of the Bible Vindicated," published, as already mentioned, in 1876. As an alternative title that of "Outlines of Christian Philosophy" might have been given to it, and its scope can be fairly gathered from the following description, contained in the preface to the work: "Briefly outlined the Christian system of philosophy is this: 'There exists an infinite, necessary, intelligent Being who, of His own free will, created all contingent things; these He rules by His providence and cares for in His love. Man is the lord of visible creation; he is the work of the Most High, and is endowed with freedom of will and an immortal soul. A law has been imposed upon him by his Creator; by its observance he can merit reward, by its transgression he will incur condign punishment. Viewing man historically the moral necessity of a revelation is made manifest; God can reveal, He has, in fact, revealed. Miracles are possible, and they are one of the evidences of revelation. No one truth can contradict another, hence between reason and revelation there can be no real contradiction.' The work is very thorough in its character. Starting from the three fundamental truths—our own existence, our ability to know with certainty some truth, and that a thing cannot both be and not be, under the same conditions at the same time; it proceeds step by step to build up in a logical manner the system outlined in the above extract from the preface. The various necessary propositions are established clearly and forcibly. The style is concise, vigorous and remarkably free from the obscurity so often found in philosophical treatises. Technical terms are used only when necessary and never without satisfactory explanation, and the book as a whole forms a complete manual of Christian philosophy, which may be read understandingly by any person blessed with an average intellect and an ordinary English education. So far as the writer is aware, it is the only work of which so much can be truly said. It is used to some extent in certain colleges, as supplementary to the regular text-books, but has not had the circulation amongst the general Catholic public which was wished for and which it deserves. This is probably due in a great measure to the fact that the work has been allowed to stand altogether on its own merits; and everyone knows that the growth in popularity of the best book is slow when not helped by judicious advertising.

"After Weary Years," although not published until 1885, was, as we are informed in the preface, completed in 1879. It is a volume of some four hundred and thirty pages, but, as the pages are not large, and the type is of good size, can be read in a few hours. It is a work which is somewhat difficult to classify, although probably most readers would call it an historical romance. The plot is simple. Two Irish couples—Mr. and Mrs. John Leahy, and Mr. and Mrs. Barton—are settled side by side on the banks of the Saint Lawrence. The Leahy couple have a son, Morgan, and a daughter, Eleanor, both full grown when the story begins. The Bartons have had a son, Denis, who disappeared mysteriously when about five years old. Mr. Barton has died, and Mrs. Barton, who feels convinced that her son still lives, has waited through many weary years for his return, which she does not cease to hope for. Filled with this hope, and feeling a great affection and

admiration for Eleanor Leahy, she induces this fair young neighbour to pledge herself not to become engaged to any one other than Denis Barton for a period of three years from the Christmas next following the opening of the story, which is in October of 1866. Morgan Leahy feels called to the priesthood, but, on learning that the temporal power of the Pope is in danger, thinks it his first duty to help to defend that, and accordingly sails to Europe and joins the Papal Zouaves. In this corps his greatest friend is called Lorenzo Aldini, and is known as the son of Giovanni Aldini, a well to do resident of Marino, a village lying some distance to the eastward of Rome. In reality the so-called Lorenzo Aldini is Denis Barton, who had been kidnapped on the banks of the Saint Lawrence many years before, at the instance of Giovanni, who had then recently lost his wife and a son whom young Barton much resembled. Mrs. Barton and her young friend Eleanor visit Rome in 1869, and the latter and Lorenzo Aldini fall in love with one another; but Eleanor is restrained from accepting him by her promise to Mrs. Barton, the term covered by which has not yet expired. In 1869 Giovanni Aldini dies, leaving a written statement for Lorenzo's information; but this does not reach Lorenzo until 1871, having been stolen from Giovanni's bed-chamber immediately after his death by a rascally old Jew named Ezra. Upon receiving Giovanni Aldini's statement, Lorenzo or Denis Barton loses no time in making his way to Canada, whither Morgan Leahy had preceded him, and seeking his mother, who is rewarded for her weary years of waiting by the return of her son and his subsequent marriage to Eleanor.

Upon the slender thread of this plot the author has hung descriptions of Canadian and Italian scenery, some of them striking and eloquent; patriotic, religious and moral reflections, with which in themselves few could quarrel; a little political economy, and much history of an eventful and critical period in the life of Italy and of the Catholic Church. The descriptions of the feelings of the people of the Papal States towards the Pope, of the characters and plots of the revolutionists, of the motives and bravery of those who fought for Pius the Ninth, and of the defeat of the Garibaldians, at Mentana, in 1867, and the attack of the Sardinian troops upon Rome in 1870, are lively and most interesting; and, coming from one who lived in Rome during the period spoken of, may be relied upon as substantially in accord with the facts. In the preface, written in 1885, Archbishop O'Brien tells his readers that "there is but little of fiction in the following pages. Historic places and events are accurately described, more accurately than in the average history." It can hardly be said that the work taken as a whole has achieved any marked success in the way of popularity. Most people nowadays prefer to take their fiction undiluted. A little history may be tolerated, but no more. Anything like moralizing, unless it be in something like Thackeray's peculiar vein, is not to be endured; and, I am satisfied, that, with all Scott's genius, were the Waverley Novels to be now published for the first time, their reception by the general novel-reading public would be far from enthusiastic. It is not then to be wondered at, that Archbishop O'Brien's publication, in which fiction forms only a slight framework to enclose a variegated tapestry of history, theology, philosophy and other grave subjects, should have appealed with only moderate success to that same public. Had the work been avowedly historical, and had it been published under some title indicating that it was an account of Rome from 1866 to 1871, by one who had lived there during those critical years, it would have attracted a different class of readers and gained a popularity and a permanent place in the literature of our day, which all the author's knowledge and ability have failed to win for "After Weary Years." It is the hope of the writer that His Grace, amongst his manifold occupations, may yet find time to prepare a second and enlarged edition of the historical portion of that work.

"Mater Admirabilis," published in 1882, is a statement of the Catholic doctrine as to the honour paid to the Virgin Mary and of the scriptural and other reasons upon which that doctrine is based, followed by a short treatise containing advice and directions as to the practice of devotion to our Lady. This is not the place to deal at any length with such a work; but one may be permitted to say that it is both interesting and instructive, and a book the reading of which by persons outside the Church would do much to remove the many misapprehensions which they entertain as to Catholic devotion to the Virgin. Though short, it is most satisfactory, and says much in a small space.

"St. Agnes, Virgin and Martyr," issued from the press in 1887, is a brief history of a saint for whom Archbishop O'Brien has an especial admiration and devotion. The writing of this little book has, therefore, undoubtedly been in every sense a labour of love. St. Agnes, a mere girl, was martyred about the year 304, during the prosecution of Diocletian. Many circumstances tended to make her martyrdom remarkable and to excite devotion to her memory. We are told in the little work now under notice that: "Over the remains of Agnes a public church took the place of the underground oratory during the reign of Constantine. With a slight change of form and somewhat enlarged it exists now, and is looked upon as one of the most interesting of all Rome's churches on account of the preservation of the form into which it was reduced by Pope Symmachus in 498." Judging from the account of the celebration of her feast given in "After Weary Years," Saint Agnes would appear to be a particularly popular

saint in Italy; and Archbishop O'Brien's book is intended to popularize devotion to her in Canada.

"Aminta, a Modern Life Drama," is the last work published by Archbishop O'Brien. The heroine and hero, Aminta and Coroman, are both at the opening of the poem Agnostics, or something of the kind, and both find earthly goods to be

Like Dead Sea fruit that tempt the eye,  
But turn to ashes on the lips.

Aminta lives with her father in a mansion by the sea, in the neighbourhood of which she is rescued from the violence of Gonzalez, an outlawed lover, by Coroman, who has just been revolving in his own mind the question of suicide. An intimacy springs up between Aminta and Coroman, which the young lady's father disapproves of, Coroman, however, rows every evening to the wall of Aminta's residence and holds conversations with her through the telephone. After this has gone on for a time, Coroman, for some unexplained reason, summarily departs from Metiz. Aminta is in despair, but after some time, in a great measure through the influence of a friend named Mathilda, becomes a Catholic. Coroman, after several years of "roaming with a hungry heart," meets at Rome with Gonzalez, now a monk; Mathilda, a nun, and Aminta and another lady friend named Rosina, both Catholics; and finally decides to join the Church himself. All are now comparatively happy and the poem ends, leaving us to understand that the fates of Aminta and Coroman are to be united. There are many eloquent passages in the poem, which want of space forbids one to quote; but, in order to give some idea of the character of the Archbishop's verse, the following lines are submitted:—

To God we gladly leave death's hour,  
His every counsel is the best;  
Yet might we make this one request,  
To fade with grass and leaf and flower;  
On some October day to die  
When sun-decked earth smiles to the sky,  
And then be laid in sunlit bower.

No gloomy cypress round our grave;  
But when our obscure course is run  
We'd sleep where brightest shines the sun.  
And dews the pansies' soonest lave;  
A cross—the pledge of life-sought prize—  
These simple words—He shall arise—  
This, this the boon I fain would crave.

Though called a drama, "Aminta" is in the strict sense of the word didactic, dealing for the most part with grave philosophical and theological questions. This being the case, it is hardly to be expected that the poem will be very generally read. Didactic poetry belongs to a much earlier age than ours. Who now reads Young's "Night Thoughts"? How many read even Dryden's "Hind and Panther"? Johnson's "Vanity of Human Wishes," the last great didactic poem, has not many readers; and Pope's "Essay on Man," probably the finest didactic poem in the language, is read for the beauty of its verse, "its brilliant rhetoric and exquisite descriptions," and not for its acute reasoning. In "Aminta" Archbishop O'Brien shows that he is capable of conducting a long and profound argument in verse; but the poem gives one the impression of a vigorous intellect striving, with comparative success, no doubt, but still with perceptible effort under the constraint of the self-imposed shackles of rhyme and metre, and not of an ardent poetic soul soaring into the chill, if lofty, regions of philosophy and divinity.

Too much attention has been devoted to His Grace's books to allow much to be said in this sketch of his utterances from the public platform and through the press. With even slight preparation, the Archbishop—although never availing himself of the arts of an orator—is always a powerful and impressive speaker. For instance, it is generally admitted that, at the Imperial Federation meeting held in Halifax, in June, 1888 (if the writer is not mistaken), his speech was the best of the evening, and probably the best ever delivered upon its subject in Canada. Even his little casual addresses, delivered as a rule without any previous study, are full of thought and practical wisdom. Like many educated Irishmen, he wields a keen and fluent pen in newspaper controversy. It would be hard to find a better specimen of its kind than Archbishop O'Brien's second letter in the controversy with Sir Adams Archibald arising out of the proceedings of the Nova Scotia Historical Society at the meeting in December, 1889, on the occasion of the reading of Professor Hind's paper with reference to the Acadians.

The Archbishop's views upon public questions are peculiarly his own. He differs from most of the Canadian supporters of Irish Home Rule in being a warm advocate of Imperial Federation, and from most Canadian friends of Imperial Federation in being a thorough-going Home Ruler. He is an ardent believer in the future of Canada, and particularly of his native island. In politics he looks more to men than to parties, but has wisely refrained from avowed support of any leader. Being first of all an ecclesiastic, he realizes clearly the injury which religion always sustains from being brought down without necessity into the arena of politics; and, although not averse to controversy and feeling a lively interest in the political questions of the day, he postpones his natural inclinations to the good of religion, and keeps his archiepiscopal robes unsullied by the dust of party conflict.

It is to be hoped that, from what has been said, the reader will be able to form a fair, even if imperfect, estimate of Archbishop O'Brien's record and character. It has been seen that he is highly endowed with the gifts of industry, business capacity, scholarship and literary abil-