

very promising aspect. Mr. Chamberlain is reported to be in a conciliatory mood, and Mr. Gladstone is evidently willing to concede a good deal in order to win back the recalcitrants.

But the most cheerless prospect for the Tories lies in Lord Randolph Churchill's attitude towards his quondam chief. The Times says that this attitude is an element in the situation boding no good to any one.

Altogether, the conservative organization seems to be in a pretty bad way—in danger not only of losing its unionist allies, but of a formidable defection from its ranks, led by Churchill, whose immense following are understood to be ripe for revolt.

We see in the crisis elements of hope for Ireland. Mr. Gladstone is again the man of the hour. The Unionists are looking with longing eyes to the grand old man, and he is willing that they should return to the ranks.

The air is full of talk of Liberal reconciliation and negotiations between the leaders of the different sections. I am able to give, in Mr. Gladstone's own words to a private correspondent, the exact terms upon which alone he will consent to any thing of the kind.

The Freeman's Journal justly holds that the adhesion of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain to the Liberal party will be decidedly brief if it cost the abandonment of the vital principle of Mr. Gladstone's Irish policy of an Irish executive responsible to an Irish Parliament only.

The Catholic press of America has lost in James A. McMaster, of the New York Freeman's Journal, a mind of gigantic grasp and herculean strength. A man born to lead his followers, Mr. McMaster throughout a long and busy life rendered church and country services the value of which it is impossible to conceive and the extent of which it were idle to attempt to describe.

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Endowed as he was with an intellect of extraordinary power, which had been trained and developed in the highest degree by careful habits of study and discipline, he was peculiarly fitted to cope with the great exigencies that constantly arose with the changes of thought and opinion that affected the public mind about the time he assumed editorial control of the paper with which his name has so long been honorably associated.

Born April 1st, 1820, at Duaneburg, Schenectady County, N. Y., James A. McMaster was the second of the three sons of the Rev. Gilbert McMaster, an eminent Presbyterian divine.

He became the secretary of that class by having renounced his allegiance to a sect, that was powerful in the number and respective ability of its following, for the Catholic faith, whose body was composed largely of poor emigrants.

At the age of 18, he was sent to the common mission of the Pope and of the Bishops to recognize the good will of the Government to consolidate that understanding in the just measure.

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search of religious truth. Presbyterianism he early rejected, to adopt Episcopalianism which for him had some outward attractions. Needless to say that here his eager, powerful mind could find no resting place.

These are matters of history that must yet be told to an appreciative and grateful Catholic America, whose early history is as heroic as that of any Church in Christendom.

"During all those forty years, on all the religious topics of the day, for with other points we are not concerned here, on all matters affecting religious interests, the welfare of the Church, his utterances were vigorous and unmistakable. Wherever the Church put him by her supreme authority, there his word rang out sound and clear.

The instincts of faith kept him true; and this because he had fully comprehended that great principle announced long ago by a servant of the Church, St. Ambrose: "Where Peter is, there is the Church, and where the Church is, there is the Holy Spirit."

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"Apart Germany and Russia represented the two great systems of division of European interests and prejudices, and on the whole pretty fairly reflected both, but together all the rest is confusion. France, whose rock-like hope has been of joining the Cossacks with her Turcos in the Uster den Linden, cannot turn elsewhere for friends, for Austria dare not move without Germany, and England and Italy both distrust French energy. Turkey, too, will unquestionably now definitely join Germany and Russia. The bitterness of this graceful coup will arouse Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Italy. It is easy to imagine that there is great despondency over one thing here, because of the conviction that this movement of peace in Europe means a Russian advance in Asia in the spring, which England will have to repel alone.

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THE CHRISTIAN ALTAR.

ITS MYSTERIOUS AND BEAUTIFUL THREE-FOLD SIGNIFICATION—THE DWELLING PLACE OF THE IMMACULATE BODY OF CHRIST.

The signification of the Christian Altar is threefold. In the first instance, it is a place of sacrifice, that is to say, the place where Jesus Christ Himself is offered in the midst of His visible Church. For this reason, the altar is a figure of that table upon which our Divine Lord instituted the Holy Sacrifice; and more emphatically still, it is a figure of the Cross of Calvary and even of His Most Holy Body, which was the very altar itself, upon which and by which Jesus Christ consummated His sacrifice for mankind.

Secondly, the altar is the dwelling place, "The throne of the Body and Blood of the Lord," as says St. Optatus, in the mountain Gilead, the altar of the Heavenly Jerusalem in which St. John saw in the midst of heaven the throne upon which the Lamb reposes, and under which the souls of the righteous await their glorification. And, thirdly, it is the altar of spiritual sacrifice, upon which the prayers and holy intentions and good works of the faithful are laid continually, and therefore it is also the figure of the Christian heart.

TABLES OF WOOD. The altars at which the Apostles and their immediate disciples served were tables of wood. The Altars in the catacombs were stone coffins, containing the bodies of martyrs, the stone or marble lids of which served for the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice. In times when there was no persecution, the altars which Christians placed in their houses and churches, usually consisted of a simple table, commonly made of wood, standing upon four legs, which in times of distress could easily be removed. Nevertheless, the fourth successor of St. Peter, Pope Evaristus, A. D. 100-109, ordained strictly that thenceforward stone altars should exclusively be erected and consecrated. The altar of stone was meant to represent our Divine Lord, who is the rock and unmovable corner and foundation stone of the Church. The altar as well as the church was placed in the direction of the rising sun, and stood at the east end of the edifice. In shape as at present, it was a rectangular oblong, hollow inside, in which the bones of Holy Martyrs were enclosed with two small doors. And so up to the present day, the relics of the Martyrs are placed under the altar-stone, because they, like their Divine Master, were offered in sacrifice. "They are triumphant victims," says St. Ambrose, "ought to be brought to the place where Christ is the great expiatory sacrifice. He upon and over the altar, because he has suffered for all. They under the altar, because by His sufferings they have been exalted." In such a way should the Christian altar be an image of that which St. John describes in his Apocalypse (vi. 9): "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the love of God, and for the testimony they held." The altar was generally dressed in white linen and adorned with gold and silver. Upon such altar it was that ascending to the language of ancient Christendom, "the Mystery of the Faith" was consummated, and treated from the earliest times as a Holy Mystery. It was withdrawn from the eyes of the uninitiated, and even the initiated among the believers looked upon it with a reverential and holy fear. On this account the altar stood in the choir, separated by a screen from the congregation and under a ciborium.

Without at all endorsing the political opinions of either of the gentlemen named, without expressing in the remotest degree approval of the present constitution of the Senate, we may say that as these appointments involve recognition of the rights of minorities to that extent at all events our warm commendation. Mr. Patterson, M. P. for Essex, to whom is due the credit for the acknowledgment of French Canadian rights in Ontario, made in the appointment of Dr. Casgrain, is, we think, entitled to the gratitude of that section of the population and to the approval of all fair minded citizens for his furtherance of the cause of equality upon which peace and harmony must rest and the future safety as well as prosperity of this country depend.

It does seem to us, however, that the German element, numbering in this Province about 300,000 souls, is, granting the right of the French Canadians with fewer than half that number of people to one Senator, fairly entitled to two members in that body. The German Catholics in Ontario are a numerous, intelligent, loyal and progressive class of citizens. They have many men in their ranks the equal of the very best of the Canadian Senate now contains. Why not then give them the recognition to which they are entitled? Believing as we do that governments should be not only just but generous to minorities, we do think that the only remaining vacancy in the Senate should be given to a German—and a Catholic. Mr. Mermer is not, as all who know anything of him will admit, by any means the most brilliant man that the German body in Ontario can offer the nation.

THE TABERNACLE. In the fourteenth century the custom began of reserving the Blessed Sacrament no longer over the altar, but in the so-called tabernacles near the altar. In small churches these were made of stone fixed in the wall and shut in with an elegant iron grating. In cathedral churches they built a beautiful little tower, highly wrought in stone and ornamented in many places with most delicate work and costly jewels and surmounted with a cross. In the lowest portion of the stem, usually reached by a staircase, the tabernacle was inserted, enclosed by a golden trelis in which the Blessed Sacrament was preserved in costly vessels. Frequently the tabernacle rested on a delicate little pillar, and over it rose the beautiful and elegant little tower. In the cathedral of Lim and Ratisbon, in the Church of St. Lawrence, at Nuremberg, may be seen such ornaments of the faith and piety of former years. For one hundred and fifty years this description of the tabernacle was in use. It was perceived at last that the altar and all Holy should be separated; Gilbertus Bishop of Verona (1225-34) was

the first who changed the custom and ordered that in every parish church in his diocese, upon the high altar should be placed a beautiful tabernacle of wood or other material, in which the Blessed Sacrament should be reserved. From that day until now all our tabernacles are the resting place of the most Holy Sacrament. Here tarries our Jesus, our all under the form of Bread; here it is that love keeps him a prisoner; and hence He calls to all weary and heavy laden ones, "Come ye here to me and I will give ye rest."—Church Progress.

SCOTLAND CHEERING FOR HOME-RULE.

Boston Republic. Mr. John Morley, M. P., in his great speech at Eliburgh, the full extent of which has reached us, took exceptionally strong ground in favor of Gladstone's policy of home rule. His defence of the character of the Irish people was, perhaps, the most notable feature of his exhaustive effort. Mr. Morley has served in the office of chief secretary for Ireland, and may be credited with intelligence enough and with sufficiently well developed powers of observation to know something of the people over whom the government had placed him. He declared frankly and vigorously that the Irish were capable of self government and, moreover, that nothing short of self government would be accepted in settlement of the long standing claim of Ireland. "You are asked," he said, "whether you are going to give a legislative and an executive power to a party of Kerry moonlighters, but does anybody accept what a passionate article writer or a pastorate politician says? Does anybody believe that the whole people of Ireland are Kerry moonlighters? Does anybody believe that there are not better men in Ireland? Depend upon it, there are good men and capable men in Ireland as there are in Scotland and England. They tell you that the Irish peasants are the most improvident people in the world. And who tell you so? Why, the landlords who are the most indigent representatives of their class to be found in the civilized world. Why, we are warned not to drive capital out of Ireland, whatever else we are to do; and who warns us? Why, gentlemen who draw many hundreds of thousands a year out of a country which they never saw and with which they have no practical relations. They put dead all pictures of the helplessness into which the Irish peasant would fall if he were left to himself; but who are the artists? They are gentlemen who live in chambers in London, who never see these poor, oppressed people from January to December.

In reply to the charge that the people of Ireland were not sympathetic or responsive to generous impulses or generous deeds, Mr. Morley cited the demonstration in honor of Lord Aberdeen when he vacated the office of lord lieutenant. "We have seen," he said, "a sympathetic regard shown for the feelings of Ireland, and we have seen good come from it. There was a day not long ago when the sullen cloud that overlaid Ireland seemed to lift, and that was the day when my noble friend Lord Aberdeen departed from Dublin. There was a going out of the heart of Ireland that day which had not been seen since 1795. And why was it? It was because these unfortunate, neglected, harshly-treated people saw a man—and perhaps it is not unbecoming of me to say that they saw a woman, too—who were more than Irish in their good will and their love for Ireland. Does anybody mean to say that all the emotion that was shown that day cannot be utilized? Does anybody mean to say there is no good in the Irish people to which we can appeal with confidence that it shall be responded to? I am sure nobody who understood what that day meant and what the days that went before it meant will entertain any notion of that kind."

Startling Statistics.

Right Rev. Bi-shop O'Farrell delivered a temperance address in this city recently, and during his address alluded to the startling statistics of the liquor traffic. He said that one thousand million of dollars were spent annually for intoxicating liquors. An average of \$20 per head for every man, woman and child in the United States. If all the churches in this country were burned to the ground, he said they could be built by total abstinence in six months. One hundred thousand persons in England drink the graves every year, and they are not the class society is anxious to rid of, but are in many cases the bones and sinews of the industry of the nation. In the city of Trenton, he said, there are spent for intoxicating drink \$40,000 a month—almost a half a million dollars a year.—Trenton Catholic Journal.

The Congregation of Sacred Rites will liberate 100 in the question which St. Thomas More, and the Roman Catholics executed in the reign of Henry VIII, and Queen Elizabeth should be beautiful and venerated as martyrs by the Church. The documents in favor of the beatification fill two large volumes.

"The Hub" Almost Catholic. Boston Pilot. Last year in the city of Boston there were by official report over 11,000 births. Of this number over 7,000 were Catholics, as shown by the ecclesiastical register of baptisms. A steady annual growth of 7 in 11, independent of the gain by immigration, will in the course of one generation make Boston the most distinctly Celtic city in the world.