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VOL. XI, No. 48

TORONTO, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1903

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Chronicles of An Old-Timer

The Celtic Revival—A Celtic Society Formerly in Canada—The Celtic Elements in Different Parts of the World—Glasgow the Leading Celtic City—What the Irish are Achieving in the United States—The Ruling Race—The Decadence of the Puritans—Massachusetts now more Irish than Anything Else—Irish-American Addresses in Chicago—What Will Make the World Ours?

763 West Madison St.,
Chicago, Nov. 28, 1903.

Dear Register,

There was organized in Philadelphia more than a year ago a Celtic society of which Robert Ellis Thompson was made president. Further than of its organization I have not heard and have reason to think it was a still-born infant. Perhaps Mr. Patrick Ford of the Irish World, put his ban upon it as he did on the Celtic Association of Great Britain, for some mysterious reason of his own. The study of Celtic history, Celtic literature and Celtic achievement would be singularly interesting and instructive at the present time, when everything is claimed for the Anglo-Saxon, and when there is a revival of Celtic sentiment and Celtic studies throughout the world. There are scholars who claim and are prepared to prove that the vital fibre in the English people to-day is not Saxon but Celtic. Certainly the Colonial element in the British empire is more Celtic than Saxon, because the Saxon has been the stay-at-home and the Celt the adventurer abroad. What a splendid theme for the lecturer would be "The Footprints of the Celt." John Mitchell adopted it, once, I remember, and what splendid discourse it was. Do you know that Ernest Renan and Matthew Arnold, one a French and the other an English poet, made Celticism a study at one time? In fact Renan was a Briton and a Celt himself and used to preside annually at a Celtic dinner in Paris, while Matthew Arnold, no doubt, had his own Celtic affiliations also. It is an undisputed fact that nearly all the British nations are of Celtic blood—the Welsh, the Cornishmen, the Manxman, the Highland Scotch, the Irish, and the Bretons of France, the latter being the descendants of the Ancient Britons that were driven out by the Saxon invaders. How much of the ancient race was left in England and what percentages of England's present populations are Celtic and Saxon is a fine subject for scholarly speculation. English writers are now claiming that all who speak the English language in England and her colonies and the United States of America and her colonies (?) including negro and Indians should be claimed as Anglo-Saxons by origin or by adoption! Shall we Celts who have a pride of achievement, permit this? This is a battle that is now waging between the two races. Shall the ancient race that came out of Mesopotamia four thousand years ago and fought its way to the centre of Europe and seized its western barriers, and subsequently followed the footsteps of the vandals and the Huns to the verge of extinction throughout western Europe, permit another race that it rescued from barbarism, to seize upon its achievements and claim them for its own? I hope not. And if not it must bestir itself and make a last, long and triumphant effort to save itself from absorption and extinction. If the Celt goes down and out forever so will go sentiment

and respect for what is noble and re-emerging in history, and will come in the supremacy of materialism and greed. Let the Celt maintain his hold upon history; let him elevate his standard and claim that honest sentiments shall rule the world. What is rare without religion and a people without sentiment good for, anyhow?

There was a Celtic society once in Canada. Its location was Kingston. One of the leading Highlanders of Upper Canada and Lower Canada too, belonged to it. When Bishop McDonnell went on his last visit to Great Britain, and Ireland and from which he never returned, it favored him with a farewell banquet. Names of Canadians that have since become prominent were members of it—the Stewarts, McDonalds, Macdonalds, McLeans, Mowatts, etc., etc. I do not know what the late Anglican Bishop of Toronto, John Strachan, was member of it too, for his residence then was Kingston, and he was a noted Scotchman. The fact that the late Sandfield Macdonald was a Celt and made Gaelic speeches to his constituents, made him a favorite among the pioneer settlers of Glengarry. The Highlanders of Scotland not many years ago were enthusiastic Gaelic and prided themselves on maintaining their national traditions and language as they did even to this day their games. But I am afraid the old sentiment is dying out among them as well as the old language. They have given such a preference for the occupation of soldiering for Great Britain and have become so commercialized that I fear there is little hope for a revival among them as there is among the Irish and Welsh Celts. There is one fact in favor of the Canadian Scotch. The only Gaelic paper published in any of the British colonies is published in Nova Scotia by one of them.

Although there are many who even yet have little hope of the practical revival of the Irish languages, it must not be forgotten that such a social phenomena has been witnessed in Wales during the last hundred years. The Welsh had as nearly lost their ancient Cymric, which is a branch of the Celtic, as the people of Cornwall have lost their Cornish, yet they have effected a complete revival, and Welsh is now taught in the public schools of that country. The Welsh have cultivated such a national pride that they are making great claims, among which is one that Shakespeare was an Englishman of Welsh blood! But, who knows? There are others who claim that this great Englishman was of French blood as indicated by his name, when properly printed—Jacques Perre.

Where the special home of the Celtic race properly belongs to-day I am not competent to say. It is usual to speak of the whole Germanic race as Teutonic, of the French race as Gallic, of the Scandinavians as Teutonic, of the Russians as Slavonic, the Mediterranean people as Iberians, etc., but it is hard to say what nationality there is in Europe without its infusion of Celtic blood. A well-known American writer on races describes the Europeans with rounded heads as Celts or the Alpine race, placing them in the centre of Europe. Spain in the days of Caesar had its Celtiberia or land of the Celts. It has been shown that the Roman historians are not to be trusted in their descriptions of the various races the Roman arms encountered. We know, however, that almost every nation of Christian faith everywhere on the verge of extinction throughout western Europe, permit another race that it rescued from barbarism, to seize upon its achievements and claim them for its own? I hope not. And if not it must bestir itself and make a last, long and triumphant effort to save itself from absorption and extinction. If the Celt goes down and out forever so will go sentiment

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There met Scot and Pict. Down from the English north in ancient times stretched the British province of Strathclyde, of the district which now includes the west side of England and which remained Celtic for the greater part. Then there is Ireland to the west of it and which has ever poured over the North Channel its contingent of Celtic people, and which to-day furnishes about one-third of its inhabitants. The Saxon invasion never gained a foothold on the Clyde, and Glasgow has the reputation of being the best governed and most progressive city in the British empire.

When I assert that the American revolution was a Celtic product I know I make a startling assertion. It is more startling than the fact that the Gaelic language is to-day being taught in several American universities and in the public schools of Boston, the leading city of New England, some of whose people at one time believed the Irish were so barbarous that they were canal appendages! Nay, more, where rational census enumerations now show that the Irish and their descendants have superseded the old Puritan stock as the larger element in the industrial basis of the population, with the French Canadians coming in as a good second among the foreigners!

How New England has lost her ancient characteristics surpasses belief. I am acquainted with an old circus man here in Chicago who travelled through New England States more than fifty years ago and travelled through them again professionally two or three years ago. He has informed me they are different altogether in characteristics; they are not the same New England at all now that they were at first—but foreigners everywhere.

I have a friend in Connecticut who recently analyzed the population of Litchfield by names in that state and discovered some startling facts. What he wondered at was the large number of Irish names and French names as well. The French element in the New England states has never been fully recognized. It has come in that section from three sources: the Protestant Huguenots, the first contingent; the Acadians of Nova Scotia, who were largely scattered through the settlements at the time of their banishment; and latterly, the French Canadians from the Province of Quebec. I remember the time when the mills of New England were operated almost solely by native hands; now they are operated largely by the Catholic elements of French Canadians, Italians and Poles, as well as Irish. Faneuil Hall in Boston, the cradle of liberty, was built by the Frenchman, and Paul Revere, whose ride aroused the minute men, was of French extraction. One of the singular facts brought to light by the American Irish Historical Society is that there are natives of New England of the ninth generation from their Irish forbears! Nay, there are some searchers who go so far as to claim that John Alden, the Puritan leader on the "Mayflower," was Irish, and that Miles Standish was originally a Catholic! See how modern research aims to upset all our preconceived notions of things! And there are historians who tell us that the Puritans, whose liberty-giving institutions, town meetings, etc., brought their ideas with them across the ocean, not from England but from Holland, and this is very likely too, for Holland was then a free country, and England to their own knowledge and crow, was not.

Glory be to God! The Irish revival is a fact. The enthusiastic dreams

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of my boyhood are being realized. Ireland is practically free and the bands that bound my religious faith are broken. England is humiliated and it is on knees soliciting friendship from America that but a few years ago she insulted and despised; an America, too, that is largely ruled by the Celtic race, as she is herself, but is not yet humiliated enough to acknowledge it. Gladstone was a pure Celt, and there are others!

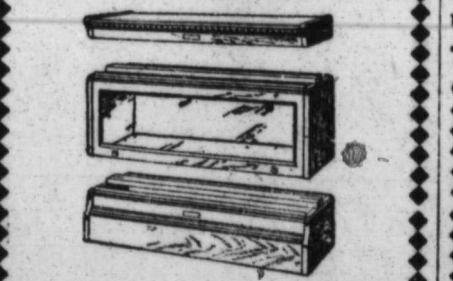
The Irish are assimilating the other foreign races in America, for they are the natural leaders of men, with their cosmopolitan characteristics, their adaptability, their tact and their persuasiveness. Their physical prowess as athletes, policemen and firemen, place them in the lead for deeds of daring and achievement, and their leadership is acknowledged. They are the trades-union captains and are getting to be the leaders in sports and theatricals.

The prominence that is being given here of late to Irish men and women of the theatrical profession makes me marvel. Four theatres last week presented four women with Celtic names as stars and I am elated over it. One of them comes from your own dear Toronto—Miss Margaret Anglin—on whose devoted head the Chicago papers have showered columns of praise for her classic acting. I learn that she is soon going to Europe to be absent five years. Another is a Chicago girl, who has risen from chorus girl to prima donna in one night—by name Miss Nora McGowan—Mama Lucia, in Mascagni's "Cavalleria Rusticana." Another is Nance O'Neil. Where she comes from I do not know, but she was the special attraction at Cleveland's theatre, where she played in "The Jewess" for two weeks. Then there is Maud Alice Kelly, leading lady at the La Salle theatre in the piece called "The Isle of Spice."

Here is another: Miss Helen Prindle, who plays the role that made Miss Maude Adams famous in a revival of "Rosemary," is said to be the youngest leading lady in the United States. She is only eighteen years of age and the daughter of Mrs. Katherine Prindle, who was for several years a writer for the Chicago press. The Prindles are one of the pioneer Irish families of Chicago and are distinguished in several ways. If there are some things in the Irish character to be ashamed of—and that there are I truly admit—but thank the Lord they are more than compensated for by the talent, the thought the brilliancy, the generosity and the most criminal country among the nations it is a great moral advantage to uphold us; if the Irish women are the most chaste in the world let the race have credit for it; and if great efforts are now being made to make the Irish men the most sober men in the British empire, let us if possible assist to make the endeavor a success, for "drink" is the word that mostly mars our vocabulary. Let us but eschew drink, let us but temperate in our habits and our actions and "the world is ours."

WILLIAM HALLEY.

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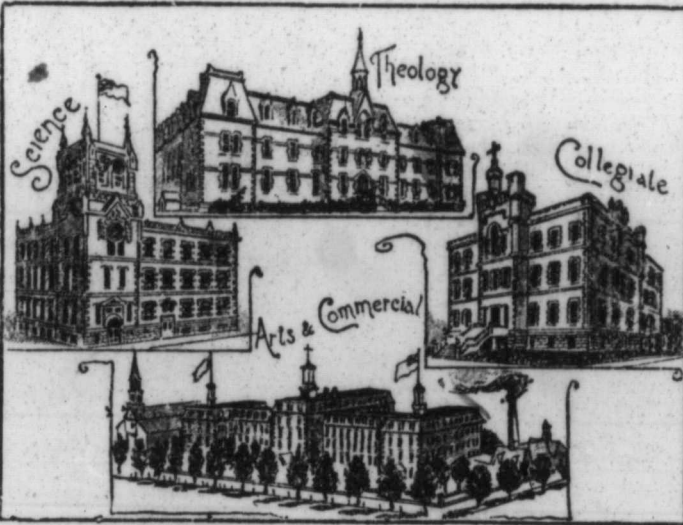
OTTAWA UNIVERSITY ON FIRE

MAIN BUILDING DESTROYED ON WEDNESDAY MORNING

Fathers McGurty, Fulham and Bayon Reported Injured.
Heavy Financial Loss.

Ottawa, Ont., Dec. 2.—(Special)—The main building of the University of Ottawa was completely destroyed by fire this morning, and what was left of the scene of a busy hive of students is this morning a huge pile of crumbling stone. The building extended a block and went up with marvelous rapidity, there being a fire wall from one end of the block to the other. The students and professors had a thrilling time of it making their escape, and that there was not a great casualty list is a surprise. Down ladders they scrambled in scant clothing, while many jumped three stories into nets held by the firemen. As it was several were more or less injured, and one priest, Father McGurty, assistant curate of St. Joseph's Church, may die. Collins, a student from Winnipeg, is also

badly burned. Others are slightly injured. The interior of the building was largely wooden, the students' dormitories burning like fury. The gorgeous chapel, with its elaborate furniture, also made an intense fire and completely paralyzed the work of the brigade. The fire broke out about 7:30 o'clock and is supposed to have started from a cigar stub or match dropped by some one at an entertainment in the academy hall last night. Later (special)—At 10 o'clock the fire was under control and was confined to the main building. There were no fatalities. Rev. Father McGurty was badly burned, but doctors say he will recover. Collins, a student from Winnipeg, was badly hurt, and Fathers Fulham and Bayon were also injured.



CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS, OTTAWA.

Idleness and Novels the Great Drawback

(For the Register.)

We are all familiar with the proverb, "Idleness has taught much evil," but hundreds of our young boys and men who think themselves remarkably clever are prone to this bad habit. They will hang around corners smoking cigarettes, cursing and learning to be smart in evil ways. Their knowledge of badness is in the superlative degree while what they should know about their catechism and their religion is in the positive degree, that is when the word great or large is used. The youth and young men of the present day are a very sad moment of the generation of years ago. In now-a-days it is clever and a piece of smartness to be able to talk and act like a so-called man before they reach the age of ten or twelve. Parents think themselves wise in their generation. What a delusion! What a shame and a disgrace! Better training, better company would have made more promising men out of such youths. Of late years, a large number of our boys are being brought before the courts. A magistrate recently declared that a great part of the crime of a city was due to idleness and that business depression was liable to increase idleness.

Hence it is important for all young people to keep themselves occupied lest the temple finding them idle give them evil work to do. "The twenty-four hours," says Father Faber, "are the same to everybody except the idle, and to the idle they are thirty-six, for weariness and idleness."

Another great fad with the young people is the reading of cursed books called novels. Why some are so crazy after them that they will see them reading them in the street cars on their way to work.

A boy who was away from a good home in Massachusetts and came New York was recently picked up by the Police in New York City. His appearance indicated that he had been well brought up. When asked why he left home he said reading story papers, and bad novels. My mother often caught me reading them and took them away from me. But I always managed to get others from my friends I thought it a fine thing.

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The new church of St. Mary, Berlin, which is to be formally opened on Sunday, December 13th, was begun in 1900, and will be one of the finest religious edifices in Canada, outside the large cities. The extreme dimensions of the church are length 190 feet; width (at transepts) 95 feet. The height of main spire is 200 feet and the smaller tower 105 feet. The width of interior is 61 feet, and height from floor to apex of ceiling 53 feet. The roof is of steel construction, in a single span. The ceilings are grained and vaulted, and lighting is obtained by a system of electric bulbs following the lines of the cornices and rib moldings of the ceilings. The materials exteriorly are principally brown Credit Valley stone and Milton red pressed brick. The main roof is slate and the spires of copper. The heating is by steam. A lofty basement extends under the whole building. The church will accommodate about 1,200. The church is completely furnished. Total cost about \$80,000.

Barrie Deanery

Very Rev. Dean Egan conducted the services in Rev. Father O'Leary's parish in Collingwood on Sunday. Last Sunday evening St. Mary's church was crowded to the doors by an audience assembled to hear Rev. Fr. O'Leary of Collingwood, lecture on "Charity towards the poor." The rev. gentleman handled his subject in a very able manner, and had the occasion warranted, would have evoked frequent manifestations of approval. The soloists of the evening were the Misses Graham, McDonald and Cameron and Mr. T. F. O'Meara. Mr. Geo. Scott, violin, and Mr. E. G. Redditt, cornet, added considerable strength to the musical portion of the service, which was under the direction of Mr. Jno. Clayton. The "St. Vincent de Paul" Society, in the interests of which the service was held, will benefit largely in a monetary sense as the contributions were of an exceedingly generous character.

Personal

Mr. T. K. Rogers of the Registrar-General's Department, met with a very serious accident the other day. He fell through a trap-door in the floor of Gough Bros. and fractured his skull. Mr. John T. Loftus, barrister, of Toronto, was on a visit to Barrie last week. Mrs. John J. Stone of Church St., who has been seriously ill, has recovered. Mr. O. B. Darland, formerly of the Remington Typewriter company, has joined the staff of the United Typewriter Co. Mrs. W. J. Motz and her mother, of Berlin, are visiting Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Seitz, 18 Isabella street.

To "Old-Timer."

Editor Catholic Register, Toronto. Dear Sir, In Old-Timer's letter of last week he makes several errors one particularly which I feel obliged to correct. In reference to Michael Murphy he states that it was he who organized the Ancient Order of Hibernians in this city. It was the Hibernian Benevolent Society which Mr. Murphy organized and not the A.O.H. In connection with many of the names enumerated in connection with the Cornwall episode he is also in error. Many other mistakes in previous letters I will deal with again. READER.

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To return to the three Kingdoms, I believe the most Celtic city or locality within them is Glasgow. The valley of the Clyde was originally Cel-