

THE GLORIES OF COLOGNE CATHEDRAL.

It may be said without fear of contradiction that the two most important achievements in the domain of ecclesiastical architecture, at least in Europe, which have distinguished the century now drawing to its close, have been the completion of the Cathedral of Cologne and the building of the great basilica of Westminster.

The Kolner Dom may be truly said to exhibit, in greater fulness of ideal perfection, than any other cathedral, the structural possibilities of Gothic architecture. We speak advisedly of structural perfection, because there can be no question that in the details of tracery and ornamentation the Cathedral of Cologne falls short of some of its rivals, and exhibits a certain formalism and lack of invention.

Cologne Cathedral was begun towards the close of that period which is rightly regarded as the golden age of Gothic architecture. Within the century which elapsed between 1150 and 1250 the following cathedrals were commenced, and to a greater or less extent completed, viz.:—Paris (1163-1177), Leon (1173), Chartres (1175-1200), Rheims (1212-1241), Amiens (1220-1288), Bourges, Beauvais, Troyes and Tours, to which may be added La Sainte Chapelle in Paris (1243-1251).

The choir of Amiens in particular was finished in 1248, and it was on August 15 of the same year (1248) that "our Lady's day that she to heaven went," as the old cathedral has it, that the foundation-stones of the Kolner Dom was laid by Archbishop Konrad von Hochstaden. And the coincidence in point of time is the more remarkable, because, as a simple matter of historical evolution, the Cologne Cathedral must be said to be the natural sequel to that of Amiens. The architect, or series of architects, who planned the Kolner Dom, have plainly taken Amiens as the model on which they worked. A mere coincidence in such a case is unthinkable, and all the more so when we remember the intercourse of city with city and friendly rivalry which were so important a part in promoting the erection of these magnificent monuments of Christian art.

The formula of the Blessing was published by order of Benedict XIV., in 1762. It is usually performed by the Pontiff during the first year of his Pontificate, and generally on the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of Easter Week, the ceremony being repeated every seven years, as also during the Jubilee of the Holy Year, on which occasions it was usual to distribute them to the Pilgrims flocking into Rome from the most remote regions. Pius IX. performed the ceremony in 1867 during the celebration of the centenary of the Prince of the Apostles.

improvements. And this he has in fact done, not only as regards the disposition of parts, but with an almost exact reproduction of the principal dimensions in height, length and breadth of the several elements of the whole. Nor has the same plan been carried out in its fulness elsewhere, except at Beauvais.

BLESSING AND SIGNIFICATION OF AGNUS DEI'S.

The ceremony of the Solemn Blessing of the Agnus Dei, which was performed by his Holiness, in the Consistorial Hall, is one of the oldest of the devout customs of the Church. Various opinions are held as to the origin of Agnus Dei. It is certain, however, that the custom of blessing them with special solemnities and by the Popes themselves was in vogue in the fourth century, under Constantine the Great, and in the reigns of SS. Melchiodo and Sylvester, though others refer to a tradition of the fifth century, which attributes the origin of the Agnus Dei to Pope Zozimus, a Greek, of Caesarea, who, in conceding to the parish churches the privilege of using the Paschal Candle—the use of which was formerly restricted to the Basilicas—gave rise to the use of Agnus Dei, or small slabs of the wax of the Paschal Candles, on which were imprinted the effigies of the precursor of the Word Incarnate and the Lamb with the cross or banner in the traditional form together with the words, "Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi." The slabs or plates of wax were not uniform, some being moulded into squares, others round, star-shaped or oval. In the earlier ages no other figures than those above mentioned were impressed upon the wax, but later we find effigies of Our Blessed Lady, or others of the Saints. According to many writers the blessing and distributing of the Agnus Dei took place on Holy Saturday, the Paschal Candle of the preceding year being broken up as a symbol of the Resurrection, and the particles upon which was stamped the figure of a lamb, distributed among the people. Both Suoni and Baronius speak of this ceremony of Benediction as taking place on Holy Saturday, the distribution being made after the Communion of the Mass of Sunday in White. This custom continued to the nineteenth century, but varied with the progress of time. The work of impressing the figures upon the wax devolved upon the Pontifical Sacristan. Clement VIII. conferred the right of preparing the Agnus Dei upon the Cistercian Monks, and this concession was confirmed by Leo XI. and Paul V. respectively, and continues to the present day.

Cardinal Stefano Borgia tells us of the mystical significance of these objects of devotion.—"These Agnus Dei are of virgin wax to signify that the human nature of Jesus Christ was assumed in the most pure womb of the Blessed Virgin, without detriment to her Immaculate purity. They are stamped with the figure of a Lamb, as a symbol of the Lamb of God, sacrificed on the Cross for man's salvation. They are immersed in blessed water, this being an element of which Almighty God deigned to make use, both under the Old and the New Law, for the working of great prodigies. In them are mixed balsam and chrism, the former to signify the good odor of Jesus Christ, which Christians should shed abroad, and the latter, charity, which should guide all their actions."

The Popes have always used great solicitude with regard to these Agnus Dei. Nicholas V., by a special Bull, issued in 1462, imposed severe penalties upon two men who had forged Bulls of Indulgences and pictures of the Agnus Dei. Paul II., by a Bull issued in 1470, imposed grave penalties on all who should make or sell Agnus Dei of wax. Gregory XIII., by his Constitutions of May, 1572, forbade under ban of excommunication, the painting, gilding, or sale of these Agnus Dei, and this Decree was confirmed by Clement XI. in 1716. On many occasions they were presented by Pontiffs to the Christian Princes, and to whom Urban V. sent Ambassadors to Paleologos, Emperor of the East, to induce him to embrace the union of the Catholic Church, he sent him by them, three Agnus Dei, with Latin verses composed by Fra. Sixtus V., also in 1586, sent several to the Doge of Venice, Pasquale Cicogna, accompanied by a Brief.

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mary of the Prince of the Apostles. This was the last time the Benediction was given solemnly by the Sovereign Pontiff until recently, when his Holiness Leo XIII. performed the same ceremony.

IRISH DISCOVERIES OF AMERICA.

Ari-Mareon, the great-grandson of O'Carroll, king of Dublin, was wrecked on the coast of Florida in 983, and called it Great Ireland, or Whiteman's Land. Biorn Abstrand, a descendant of King Aulaf, of Dublin, who fled from Ireland in 988, however, may have given it the name of New Ireland even before the days of Ari. Gudleif, a Dublin merchant, was driven afar by contrary winds and found people talking what seemed to be Irish, although the place must have been Iceland. He placed Biorn... and carried back Biorn's messages and presents to Ireland. The connections between Greenland and the old world can be found in following such authors as Rafu, Ortelius, Suhm, Schoning, Londeyorg, Schroder, Flinn Magnusson and Reinhold Foster. Thus when Iceland was discovered in 870 by Lief and Ingolf, the Norwegians, on it were found "Irish books, bells and croziers which had been left behind by some Irish Christians called Papae." The "Irish Danes" of the east of Ireland were often Swedes and Norwegians. Their residence soon made them more Irish than the Irish, while their adventuresomeness made them the discoverers of America. About the year 1000, Lief, the son of Eric the Red, "found three lands, which he named Hottland, Markland and Vinland; the Norwegians say these now form Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and New England, about Massachusetts, and they also believe that Lief sailed there several years." His and similar adventures must have exercised an influence on the Irish imagination.

But, even before the Dublin Northmen, we have traditions of the discovery of America by the Irish, and the voyages of Sts. Brendan and Barislan are the earliest authentic records of European intercourse with the Western hemisphere. Two eminent prominent historians, Cardinal Moran and Canon O'Hanlon, have related at great length the life and voyage of St. Brendan having ever reached the continent of America has never been proved, although traces have been discovered to show that Irishmen had settled in the southern part of North America and had introduced civilization centuries before Columbus planted the flag of Spain on that great continent. Rafu can be quoted to show that the use of the Irish language in Florida as far as the eighth century, and Von Teuchel to show the presence of Irish colonies along the coast reaching from Chesapeake Bay and extending down into the Carolinas and Florida. The Irish origin of some North and Central America tribes—the similitude between the Hiberno-Celtic and American-Indian dialects—the study of Rusk on early Irish voyagings to Iceland, and the work of Conta, the Arabian, who wrote in 1090 for Roger II. of Sicily, all refer to this. The book of the latter was called "Amusements of the Curious in the Exploring of Countries." It was written in Arabic. It shows the New World, describes it, and calls it Great Ireland.

Intercourse, as the Icelandic annals prove, was kept up with the American continent as late as 1847, yet it was confined to the ignorance which prevailed in Europe respecting it at the time of Columbus. We read in the accounts of Columbus' voyages that as early as 1474 he conceived the idea of reaching India by sailing westward. In 1477, he tells us, he sailed 100 leagues beyond Thule, probably to Iceland. Columbus could hardly find anything more suggestive for his wonderful discovery than the following accurate statement of an Icelandic geographer: "On the west of the great Sea of Spain, which some called Ginnungap, and leaning somewhat towards the north, the first land which occurs is the good Vinland, so called by Lief, son of Eric the Red, who visited the New World in the year 1000."—New Ireland.

EDWARD KEHOE DEAD.

Every student of Carlow College will recognize the death of a true and dear friend, Edward Kehoe, who has passed away in his 86th year, was the last link in a long chain connecting the present students of Carlow with those of the far old distant past. He entered Carlow Law College in 1833, when the great J.K.L. wielded the crozier of the diocese, and when "Father Andrew" was President of the College. From 1838 to 1860, with the exception of two short intervals, he spent all his days as student and Professor in the College. Most of his early associates have long since passed away. He was the one of all others who knew the early and inner history of the College, yet in his familiarity he

never could be persuaded to write the history of the "old and venerable institution." He was an accomplished scholar. A perfect ancient classic of the olden type, a pure writer of the English tongue, a professor of declamation such as it is rare to meet. In a word, a professor of so varied attainments as would honor a chair in any college in the kingdom.

ANOTHER IRISH BISHOP.

It is announced that the Pope has been pleased to appoint the Most Rev. John Healy, D.D., LL.D., Lord Bishop of Clonfert, to be Conductor Bishop to Cardinal Moran of Australia, and that his Lordship will shortly leave for Australia to take up his new duties. Dr. Healy is a Senator of the Royal University of Ireland, and Vice-President of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. His departure from this country will remove from our midst one of the most gifted, learned, and respected members of the Episcopacy of this kingdom.

MARQUETTE MONUMENT.

The officers and trustees of the Marquette Monument Association, which has been incorporated under the laws of Michigan, to erect a national monument or statue in honor of the memory of Father Marquette, in the State Park at Mackinac Island, Michigan, have arranged for a meeting in furtherance of the objects of the Association, and as a memorial to Father Marquette, to be held under the auspices of said Association, Aug. 1st, 1900, at the Island of Mackinac. It is to be designated as "Marquette Day," and address upon the life, work and character of Father Marquette will be made by The Rev. Thomas E. Sherman, S.J., of Chicago, and by General John C. Black, of Chicago.

LIMERICK MURDER TRIAL.

The trial of Thomas Smith for the murder of the Rev. Mr. Hudson, was resumed at the Summer Assizes before Mr. Justice Kenny. Matthew Russell and Timothy Ryan, veterinary surgeon, for the defence, swore that Smith had been drinking, and was in the habit of firing off shots. Dr. O'Neil, Medical Superintendent of the Limerick Lunatic Asylum, deposed that he examined the prisoner on May 28, and informed the opinion that the prisoner was perfectly sane. Dr. Geleston, the prison doctor, concurred in this view. After about half an hour's absence the jury returned to court with a verdict that the prisoner did kill the Rev. Mr. Hudson, but that he was insane at the time, and not responsible for his actions. His Lordship ordered that the verdict be recorded, and that the prisoner be detained in custody until Her Majesty's pleasure was known.

A WISHBONE MYSTERY.

It is an old saying that the hand is quicker than the eye, and the slightest-of-hand man makes use of this in performing some of his seemingly marvelous tricks. Tricks that are deceptive to the eyes are classed among "optical illusions" and are often very simple. For making a little machine a duck's wishbone serves best. Fasten a strong piece of twine to one of the points of the wishbone; pass the twine to the opposite point and fasten it, and then carry it back to the first prong and fasten, thus connecting the two prongs of the wishbone by two bits of twine. Half way between the prongs and between the cords insert a match and twist it, turning it over and over until the cords are well twisted together. Then pull the match back so that one end of it rests on the snank of the wishbone. Now if you reverse the position of match so that its loose end rests on the opposite side of the wishbone and has to be held in place to keep it from flying back your machine will be ready for the experiment. When you remove your restraining finger from the match the end of the match will instantly describe a complete circle, but the funny part of it is that the match will seem to cut right through the shank of the wishbone in order to get to the other side. You may do the trick as many times as you please, but the eye will never detect the match in the act of describing the circle.

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