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Vol. LIX., No. 8

MONTREAL, THURSDAY, AUGUST 19, 1909

PRICE, FIVE CENTS

Celtic Cross To Tell Of Sad Irish Chapter.

Great Memorial to Ship Fever Victims Unveiled on Telegraph Hill at Grosse Isle in Presence of Church Dignitaries, Canadian Officials and Representatives of A. O. H

Granite Pile Unveiled by Mgr. Sbaretti, the Papal Delegate, After Unusual and Impressive Ceremonies of Religious and Patriotic Character.

Not all monuments are signs of faith; some serve only to mark sinful pride, but that memorial which last Sunday was unveiled on Telegraph Hill, Grosse Isle, will stand for firm faith and inspired courage so long as time lasts.

Peace has its victories, peace has its victims, and the huge Celtic cross that now rears high from its island foundation will serve to remind men that there are more noble heroes found in lowly places than in the dramatic din of the battlefield.

This particular memorial has an unusual story to tell and, because of its coin of vantage, will tell that story to wandering thousands who otherwise might not have an opportunity to learn of the dreadful fate of thousands of Irish men and women who fled from famine to encounter another scourge, that of the terrible ship fever. It will serve, too, to make known the heroism of brave men who stood by those poor people in their hour of need; and, again, it will cause to be spread far and wide the tale of the priests who walked in a living death that the children of the Faith might be administered to.

AN IMPOSING SCENE.

It was an impressive scene that caught the eye of the spectator at Grosse Isle on Sunday. Here were the high dignitaries of the Church—the true Church—to which these people have given intelligent allegiance; representatives of the free government of a liberal country in which those who had escaped the plague, and other Irishmen, had found that opportunity for which they had fled across the sea; men from another land, a land which had proven a haven for distressed and harassed Irishmen, all these people were gathered to revere the dead and honor the living. Voices spoke in three tongues to testify to the faith and courage of the dead and to speak of the heroism of those who served them; and to bear witness, too, of the harmony which exists in this province between the Catholics of Irish origin and those of another fair land—What a picture for the world to look upon!

MANY AT MASS.

It was a glorious day that was ushered in for the occasion and enabled thousands of faithful citizens to repair to the scene of the ceremonies at Grosse Isle. A fleet of seven steamers left Lower Town wharves for the island carrying those who desired to participate. On board of the C.G.S. Alice, on which Hon. Charles Murphy, Secretary of State, acted as host, were Mgr. Sbaretti, the Papal Delegate, Mgr. Sinnott, Rev. Father O'Boyle, O.M. I., Vancouver; Abbe Rene Casgrain, Mgr. Kirnan, Philadelphia; Sir Chas. Fitzpatrick, Sir C. A. P. Pelletier, Lieutenant-Governor; Captain Victor Pelletier, A.D.C.; Hon. Wm. Power, Dr. Guerin, Hon. Chas. Doherty, Mr. J. C. Beauchamp, President of St. Jean Baptiste Society, Montreal; Mr. H. Kearns, St. Patrick's Society; Mr. D. Coverey, Provincial Secretary A.O.H., Mr. W. J. Lynch, Ottawa.

On board of the C.G.S. Druid were the official representatives of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, including Mr. Matthew Cummings, National President; Mr. James T. Regan, National Vice-President; Mr. James T. McGinnis, National Secretary; Messrs. C. J. Foy, J. D. O'Meara, John F. Quira, P. T. Moran, Major E. T. McCrystal, National Directors. In addition were the provincial and local officers, including Hon. C. R. Devlin, Hon. J. C. Kaine, Rev. Father Hanley, C.S.S.R., Rector of St. Patrick's Church, Quebec; Rev. Father Maloney, C.S.S.R., St. John, N.B.; Rev. Father Maguire, Provincial Chaplain of the A.O.H.; Mr. Ed. Reynolds, one of the organizers of the A.O.H. in Quebec, and many others.

Among the Montreal representatives of the A.O.H. were Messrs. P. Kaine, Provincial President; P. Scullion, Provincial Vice-President; J. O'Neill, Provincial Treasurer; P. Doyle, County President, T. Heavers secretary; C. G. Gleason, McMorow, J. McGrath, M. Brogan, P. Malone and W. Kennedy.

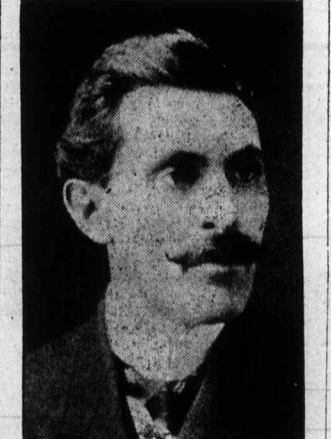
THE SOLEMN SERVICE.

An altar had been erected for the occasion, and to it repaired the clergymen and the faithful immediately after their arrival at Grosse Isle, Father Hanley, C.S.S.R., rector of St. Patrick's Church, Quebec, was celebrant of the Mass which followed. A choir and the band of the Q.O.C.H., were responsible for the musical portion of the ceremony. A guard of honor at the altar was furnished by the uniformed Knights of Montreal and St. John and the Hibernian cadets. At the elevation the swords of the Knights flashed in salute.

At the conclusion of the mass, Rev. Father Maguire, provincial chaplain, ascended the altar steps and delivered the sermon:—"As gold in the furnace, be bath

proved them, and as a victim of a holocaust, he has received them, and in time there will be respect had to them. (Wisdom Ch. III., v. 6.)

Your Excellency, Your Grace, My Dear Brothers: What a strange picture, unique in history, does the vast assemblage present. From near and distant parts of the broad and free Dominion of Canada and the great United States of America, men of humble calling, men holding high stations in church and state, especially honored and favored by the distinguished presence of His Excellency the Apostolic Delegate, by the gracious presence of the venerable Archbishop of this great diocese. All animated and impelled by the strongest



MR. P. KEANE, Provincial President.

sentiments of religion and nationality we have met in this quarantine island as representatives of the Irish race to pay loving tribute to thousands of our brethren whose dust forms the soil we are treading; to honor their graves with the incense of prayer; the sacrifice to feast our eyes with the sight of that emblem of faith and nationality the Celtic cross, which to-day is to be dedicated and blessed by His Excellency,



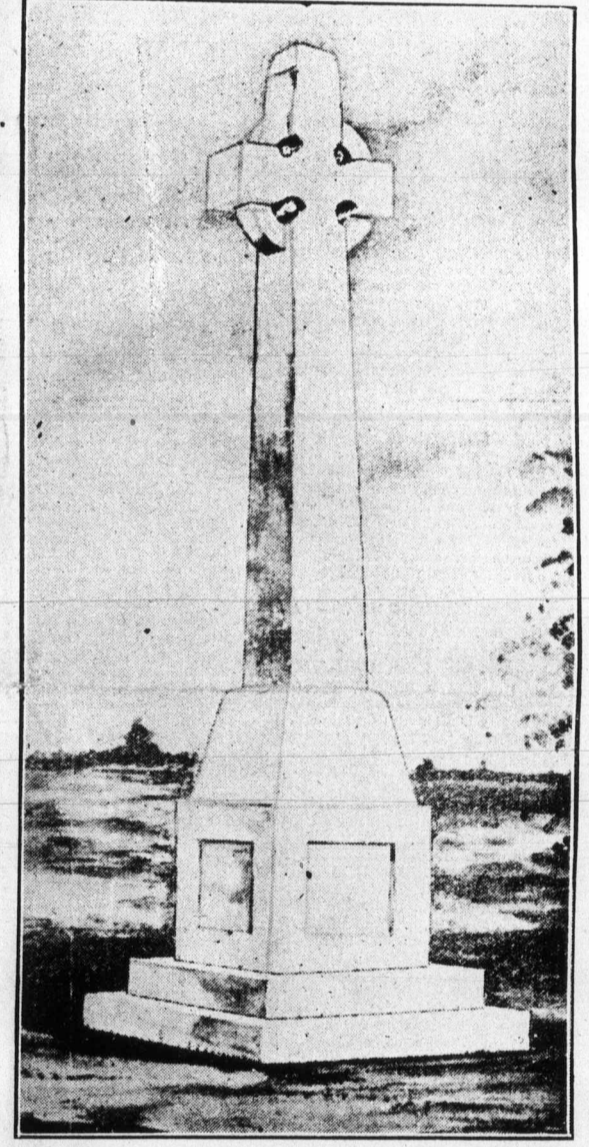
MGR. SBARETTI, Papal Delegate

the delegate of the Holy See.

A WORTHY MONUMENT.

For years has been often repeated the wish of our people that this spot be marked by a monument worthy of the thousands of our down-trodden race who here fell victims of the famine and ship-fever of 1847, but for want of organization the pious prospect had not materialized, when the Ancient Order of Hibernians nobly took the matter in hand. Last year the chief officer of this great society, in words glowing with religious patriotism, portrayed to the hundreds of delegates in convention at Indianapolis, Indiana, the scenes of the awful tragedy of Grosse Isle. "I consider," he said "the grave containing so many thousands of our race the most sacred spot in America." The answer was unanimous and hearty and to-day we pride ourselves that a national and sacred duty has been grandly fulfilled.

But this cross is not alone a memorial of the Irish exiles who died here, it is also a monument of lasting gratitude, and a memorial bearing to future generations the names of that band of forty-two priests, soldiers of Christ, than whose heroism none greater was ever witnessed on any field of battle. The Catholic priest responds, he must respond, to the most perilous duty, there is no shirking when called to the plague house or bed of contagion to console the sick and administer the sacraments to the dying. Thus it was with this noble band most of whom were Canadians of French extraction, comforting, like the Good Samaritan, the robbed and wounded stranger, working without flinching among the dead and dying. True it is they were consoled in their performance of duty. The manifestations all around them of that deep Irish faith, or that perfect resignation to God's holy will, which accompanied their lamentations, their exclamation, "How long, O Lord, how long" yet willing to drink to the dregs the chalice of their sorrow. Yes, this and the prayers and blessings heaped upon the welcome priest consoled and fortified him. Father Taschereau, then professor of rhetoric at the Seminary of Quebec, late Archbishop of Quebec and cardinal, one of those who contracted the contagion, writes from the scene of hor-



MONUMENT TO FEVER VICTIMS

ror that he is filled with a happiness he never felt before and that the only sorrow that he can experience at Grosse Isle will be brought to him by the letter that shall order his recall. These priests have gone to their eternal reward, only one remaining whom God has left to see this day. He has made the long journey from New Brunswick to be with us, and to-day all eyes are turned, all hearts are drawn to the old priest of '46, the venerable Father Hugh McQuirk.

A SAD CHAPTER.

This occasion naturally brings us back to one of the saddest chapters of Ireland's sad history under foreign rule, that which recalls the loss to Ireland of two million of her people, whether by death or exile. History teaches us that legislation and tariff regulations made to benefit England's commercial enterprises had so discouraged agriculture that the only food of the Irish peasantry was the potato. Hardly in any country coming within the pale of civilization was the peasant population relying for their food on one vegetable. When the crop failed in the fall of 1845 it was ominous, the outlook was serious. Two repeated failures absolutely deprived the people of the country and the poor of the towns of their only means of sustaining life. An agonizing cry went up all over the land, famine stalked that beautiful isle. People were dying everywhere, at home, in the fields, on the roads, in the churches.

SYSTEM WAS DOOMED.

The Irish poor law system was now doomed to destruction, it could no longer stand the demand, the

rush for food. Until 1846 work-houses were held in abomination. Mothers would suffer the direst poverty rather than allow the breaking up of home, separation from their children. But soon the harrowing fangs of starvation made them submit and even the jails were brought to be fed. Then commenced the cruel breaking of nature's closest bonds, the brutal separating of husband and wife, the



MR. P. DOYLE, County President.

child torn from its mother, scenes that would melt a heart of stone. But they submitted, feeling that they must part; death was all around, staring into their gaunt and pallid features; they parted half willing, knowing it was departing for a better home beyond the skies. "They separated," says Sullivan, "as victims at the foot of the guillotine."

THE IRISH EXODUS.

What has been called "the Irish Exodus," had now truly begun. The cry to America resounded everywhere. There is a mad rush for the emigrant ship. The emigrant ship of black '47. What feelings are stirred up in the soul by that word. It recalls the separation of dearest friends, the tearing away of brother from sister, of sons from aged parents, the father's God bless you and last farewell; it recalls the breaking of hearts, the vain effort of faltering and grief-choked voices, the last glimpse of the waving handkerchief watched through a haze of tears, the last glimpse of Ireland.

In those days of the sailing vessel, when the rapid ocean greyhound was unknown, the ocean voyage lasted from six to as many as twelve weeks. When we consider that the vessels were all without sanitary precautions, that the food was not only the poorest but insufficient, that water was had and rarely given, sometimes refused for more than a day, that the passengers, men, women and children, were packed together to a stifling degree, it is wonderful then that every one of the eighty-four ships that had reached here at the opening of navigation, were all reeking with pestilence and that the priests who boarded the vessels and penetrated under deck with smoking lanterns to pick their way, were almost immediately forced back, only being able to remain below after several efforts, and then only for short visits. Some of these vessels had not yet thrown all their dead into the sea, and these would be piled as cordwood upon the deck.

SPREAD OF THE DISEASE.

The condition of things was at first only a trifle better on land; the few sheds were crowded as was the little chapel that stood on yonder hill. The patients lay in hundreds for some time under the canopy of heaven and the death rate rose at times to 200 a day. Before quarantine closed many were sent to Montreal, where the disease made thousands of victims. Bytown, now Ottawa, Kingston and Toronto, suffered dreadfully by the epidemic, and the inhabitants of these cities know of the tale of woe.

Orphans to the number of 600 were adopted into kind French-Canadian families. Father Cazeau, later Vicar-General, used his great influence with the priests to have homes provided for these children, many of whom afterwards became priests and nuns. By his constant kindness to these children he was called the father of the Irish. Pages most pathetic have been written on this subject, so familiar that they need no repetition here. Considering the late hour and the beautiful discourses with which you are to be regaled I have perhaps overstepped the limit assigned me. But before abandoning this altar let us lift up our eyes on this day of the Assumption to our home in heaven, where our Divine Saviour greets His blessed mother and ask her to intercede with her Divine Son to shower His blessings upon us and upon the land of our fathers and hasten the day when the eagle spirit of old Ireland, arising from the sepulchre, may set its gauge on the never setting sun of freedom.

SUNG THE LIBERA.

A solemn Libera was sung at the conclusion of Father Maguire's sermon by Mgr. Begin, who was assisted by Rev. Father Maloney, C.S.S.R., and Rev. Father O'Farrell.

The morning's proceedings were brought to a close by His Grace Mgr. Begin, who delivered one of the most eloquent addresses of the day.

My Dear Brethren: This day is truly memorable for the Irish in America. It is more particularly so for our fellow-countrymen of this Province and—might I not rightly add?—for those of the diocese and city of Quebec.

You have come here to consecrate by a fitting monument the memory of a sad yet edifying page of your nation's history, that which recalls the exile and death, but likewise the heroism, the constancy and faith of those who in '47 and '48 ended here as one of the sentences engraved on this monument so aptly expresses it—"life's sorrowful pilgrimage."

A BITTER LESSON.

A monument according to the true meaning of the word, is a taken, a sign of remembrance. You, of this present generation, have heard from the lips of survivors of that awful period the tale of their trials and sufferings; but your place will soon be filled—if it is not already so—by others who might little dream of the mourning and sadness that heralded the advent of their forefathers to the land of their adoption. Your fellow-citizens of French descent had learned before you, on these very shores, the bitter lesson of hardship and privation; and so as not to forget the heroism of their ancestors, they have chosen for their motto the simple word; Je me souviens, "I remember." Is it not a kindred sentiment that has inspired the organizers of this present im-

(Continued on Page 5.)