



# CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

VOL. III.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1853.

NO. 31.

## PASTORAL OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

*Paul, by the grace of God and of the Apostolic See, Archbishop of Dublin, Primate of Ireland, to the Catholic Clergy and Laity of the Diocese of Dublin.*

The return of the joyful festival of our national Apostle can never fail to fill our hearts, dearly beloved, with sentiments of gratitude and thanksgiving to the Giver of all good gifts, reminding us, as it does, of His mercy in calling our forefathers to the true Faith, and making them members of the Church of Jesus Christ, thus preparing the same ineffable graces and favors for us their posterity. Before St. Patrick commenced his career, the Sun of justice had already shed the effulgence of His rays on the vast provinces that had yielded to the sway of Greece or Rome, dispelling the darkness of ignorance and superstition, and the voice of the Apostles, conveying the glad tidings of salvation, had resounded even to the extremities of the earth; but our remote island had not participated in these great blessings, and at the beginning of the fifth century its inhabitants, immersed in idolatry, adoring the work of their own hands, or other created objects, destitute of the consolation of true religion, were sitting in darkness and the shades of death. Oh, how miserable is the condition of those to whom Faith, the root and foundation of all justification, has not been given, or who have miserably lost so precious a gift, and extinguished the life of grace in their souls!

But thanks to the merciful economy of our God, the duration of this sad scene was not to be prolonged, and our country was to be raised from its fallen and degraded state. To use the words of the Scripture, "the land that was desolate and impassable shall be glad, and the wilderness shall rejoice and flourish like the lily....the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped....for waters are broke out in the desert, and streams in the wilderness."—Isaiah, xxxv. This work of mercy and regeneration is due to the labors of St. Patrick, whom Providence had destined to cultivate and fertilize by Divine grace a soil hitherto neglected and rebroate, producing only thorns and briars. It was not out of those who glory in the greatness, the affluence, and the wisdom of the world that our Apostle was selected, but from among the poor and the afflicted. For our consolation, and the consolation of all afflicted and persecuted souls, it has been written that "the foolish things of this world hath God chosen that He may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen that He may confound the strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are contemptible, hath God chosen, and things that are not, that He might bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His sight."—1 Cor., i.

It was, dearly beloved, the glory and consolation of St. Patrick, that his teaching brought forth an abundance of fruit, and that he did not cast the seed of the Divine Word upon an ungrateful or a barren soil. Before the termination of his Missionary career it was his happy lot to see the religion of Jesus Christ introduced into every corner of this kingdom, and with it the practice of every virtue. The temples of Baal are deserted, altars are erected to the true God, and hymns and canticles of praise resound from every hill and every vale to the Creator of Heaven and Earth, whilst the pure oblation, which, according to the prophet, was to be offered from the rising to the setting sun, now ascends from places hitherto polluted by the impure sacrifices of the Druids. Men that were before devoted to deeds of blood and violence, now yield to the mild influence of the Gospel: vices heretofore deified and practised with impunity, are banished from the land, and numerous communities of holy men and women profess, like their Divine Master, chastity, obedience, poverty, and the other Evangelical counsels, and shed the fragrance of every virtue around them, even before our Saint closed his eyes to this world. At the same time the beneficent and civilising effects of Christianity on society were felt, the arts were encouraged, and those schools and colleges established which became nurseries of sanctity and learning, and in which the torch of science continued to burn during the convulsions that accompanied the downfall of the Roman empire, and the darkness of the middle ages.

How powerful then, dearly beloved, and wonderful is God in His Saints, who thus avails Himself of a weak and, to human eyes, contemptible instrument to effect great things, to change the condition of a whole nation, and to confer the greatest blessings upon it. Truly "the foolishness of God is wiser than men: and the weakness of God is stronger than men."—1 Cor., i. 25. Let us learn from this example not to put our hopes in the wealth, or power, or protection of this world, which passes away like a dream, but place our confidence in God. Let us endeavor to enter into the spirit of our Saint, and to form our

lives on the model he has left us. All our actions should be regulated by the principles of faith, not by the maxims of an earthly and carnal prudence: humility, self-denial, obedience, charity, and poverty, such as we admire in our Saint, resignation to the will of God, patience in sufferings, should shine forth in all our undertakings. Unless we imitate the Saints and walk in their footsteps, we cannot expect to obtain an imperishable crown, or to be participators in their glory. If we be true and devoted children of our Saint, if we be grateful to our best benefactors, should we not attend to the lessons which he gave us, and endeavor to correspond to the graces which through his agency we have received, by denying the flesh and its concupiscences, by leading lives of prayer and of sanctity, and by proving ourselves worthy disciples and imitators of our Apostle.

Whilst preparing for the approaching festival, there is one feeling which should predominate in our minds—a feeling of gratitude to God for having condescended to preserve to the present day the Faith planted here by St. Patrick, and to protect the Catholic Church of Ireland from the dangers that so often threatened its immediate destruction. The labors of but few among the Apostles of the different nations of the earth have received that privilege of permanency with which his were endowed. The Churches of the East, that were honored by the presence of the immediate Disciples of Christ, and edified by their preaching, their miracles, and their virtues, have yielded to the corroding effects of time. And where are the Churches that listened with raptures of delight to the eloquence of their Basils and their Gregories, their Cyrils, their Cyprians, and their Augustines? We cannot consider their melancholy fate without being filled with alarm for ourselves, lest our unworthiness and our iniquities should bring similar visitations upon us. Alas! there is scarcely a trace of those once glorious Churches now remaining; their glory has been eclipsed; desolation has spread around them; the Crescent has supplanted the Cross, and the impure rites of the Koran have been substituted for the practices of the Gospel. But our Saint was sent that "he should produce fruit, and that his fruit should remain." The edifice raised by his hands has never been shaken, though assailed by all the powers of earth and hell. In the fourteen centuries which have now passed away since Patrick was called to his everlasting crown, our afflicted country has gone through many and sad vicissitudes, the prey in succession of every invading foe. Dynasties have disappeared; her language, customs, property, territorial divisions, have been changed; revolution has succeeded revolution, and one disaster has been followed by another; yet, when our Saint now looks from his throne of glory on the Church he founded, the scene that presents itself to him is similar to that which consoled his dying moments. The same Faith is now professed, the same Sacraments administered, the same communion maintained with the Holy See, the fountain and centre of unity, and with the other portions of the vast fold of Jesus Christ. Dioceses established by him still retain their ancient names and territories; the Bishops consecrated by his hands are now represented by others, holding the same doctrines, exercising the same jurisdiction, equally obedient to the successors of Peter, having succeeded each other from his time in an unbroken line even to the present day. Though it was not to be expected that the smiles and threats of power, and the malice and corruption of the human heart, would not, in individual cases, produce their natural fruits, yet we can boast that, as a body, the appointed successors of St. Patrick and their Clergy, displayed unexampled constancy in the darkest hour of trial. They never changed their creed at the bidding of a wicked king or of his cruel daughter, nor consented to receive their crosses and their mitres from such polluted hands. But, like the Apostle St. Paul, "as the Ministers of God, in much patience, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in prisons, in seditions, in labors, in watching, in fasting . . . trusting in the word of truth, in the power of God, by the armor of justice." 2 Cor., vi., 4.; they rejected the allurements of this earth, adhered to the rock on which they had been built, and preserved the deposit of the Faith. And how amply compensated have they not been, even in this world, by the affections of their flocks, who have adhered to them through good and evil report, shared in their trials and afflictions, and preferred to lose all the goods of this world rather than, by renouncing the truth, to suffer the shipwreck of their immortal souls.

Good God, how can we be sufficiently thankful to Thee for the benefits conferred upon us and our Church, in preference to others more deserving of Thy favors. Truly we can say—"Non fecisti taliter omni nationi." "Thou hast not done so to every nation." May it be our perpetual study to

deserve a continuance of these favors; may pride, degrading immorality, and ignorance, which alone dispose a Catholic to renounce his Faith, be always the object of our abhorrence.

It is not, dearly beloved, in a spirit of boasting that we recal to mind the unshaken constancy of our Church. As it is not in our power to merit the gift of faith from God, so we should be persuaded that no exertion of ours, were we abandoned by Divine grace, would be sufficient to preserve it. To God we are debtors for whatever we possess, and to Him should be referred all the glory. However, our past history is not to be forgotten, since at the present time there are men who controvert the glorious privileges of our Catholic Church in Ireland, and pretend that her ancient doctrines were at variance with those which we now profess. Charges bearing the names of Protestant dignitaries abound in such pretensions, which are re-echoed every day in the vile tracts, teeming with calumny and misrepresentation, that the hired agents of proselytism scatter through our streets.

Their reason for inventing this theory is easily penetrated: As Our Divine Redeemer promised that He would be with His Church all days, even to the consummation of the world, and that the gates of Hell should never prevail against her, who was declared to be the pillar and ground of truth, it is clear that she must have existed in every century; and if she had become a prey to heresy and schism, or been abandoned to the abominations of idolatry, the promises of Christ would have been vain and faithless. Hence, when the standard of rebellion was raised in the sixteenth century against the Catholic Church, it was inconvenient for the reformers to acknowledge that their doctrines bore the stamp of novelty, and that the sects which they had founded had appeared fifteen hundred years too late to have any title to claim kindred with the Church instituted by Christ, and spread over the world by His Apostles and their successors.

To extricate themselves, if possible, from so embarrassing a difficulty, some of the sects traced back their origin to a remote period through the Waldenses, the Albigenses, or other offsprings of Manichæism. As it was not creditable to be derived from such polluted sources, some of our Dissenting countrymen, adopting a different course, claimed to be considered the lawful representatives of St. Patrick and his successors, and attempted to prove the identity of their Church, as established by act of parliament, with the Catholic Church of ancient times in Ireland.

Never was there a claim more destitute of a solid foundation, or even of the appearance of probability. It is true that in the storms of persecution which have swept over our Church, her records and the writings of her learned men have been in a great measure destroyed; yet, notwithstanding this calamity, an abundance of monuments has been preserved from the general wreck to vindicate her Faith. If time would permit us to pass in review the councils held in Ireland, the lives of our Saints, the penitential canons enacted at various times, a state of things altogether at variance with Protestant ideas would present itself. The Liturgy in Latin was in general use, and at every step we find mention of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the invocation of Saints, prayers for the dead, confession, fasting, abstinence, and other works of mortification not tolerated by the reformers. Nor is it to be forgotten that in the most remote times Ireland was in an especial manner the land of convents and monasteries, and that thousands of her pious sons and daughters crowded these institutions, professing poverty, chastity, and obedience, and spreading on every side the brightest lustre of Christian virtue.—Would modern heresy have encouraged the growth of such communities? It has been in past times its study to misrepresent and traduce the monastic Orders, to destroy their convents, to confiscate their property, and to persecute the holy men that belonged to them. Recent events show that this tendency is not as yet altered, so that it cannot but appear strange that men, animated with this spirit, should claim any connection with a Church so distinguished in ancient as well as in modern times for its attachment to the discipline of a religious life.

But we are told that the Irish Church, in its early days, existed in a sort of isolation, not connected with the Churches of the Continent, and especially with Rome. Our whole Ecclesiastical history and every page of our antiquities supplies the clearest and fullest refutation of such statements. So far from being cut off from the communion of other Churches, or left in that state of separation and isolation which is a mark of reprobation on the Anglican Establishment since its first foundation, our Church maintained the closest connection with the Faithful spread over the several parts of Europe, frequently sending Missionaries among them, whose labors were highly ap-

preciated, and equally successful. It would occupy too much time to enter fully into this subject, which, however, can be sufficiently illustrated by the brief statement of a few facts.

Shortly after the days of St. Patrick, we find that the great father of the northern monks, St. Columba, and his disciples Aidan, Colman, Finian, and others, made the Western Isles, the Highlands of Scotland, Northumbria, and other provinces of Britain, the scenes of their labors, and gained them over to Christ. Before the end of the 6th century, another great Missionary and founder of monasteries, St. Columbanus, whom Baronius compares to the Prophet Elias, passing with many companions into France, renewed the spirit of Christian fervor in that country, and afterwards penetrating into Switzerland and Italy, merited the veneration of all by the fervor of his zeal, the rigor of his mortification, and the great sanctity of his life. The countries which he evangelised still retain a grateful recollection of his labors, whilst his disciples, St. Gall, Eustathius, and others, are also held in high esteem. There is scarcely a province in France which does not cherish the memory of some Irish Missionary of the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries. Two holy Priests, Cardoc and Fricor, preached in Picardy in the seventh century, and founded the monastery of Centula at Ponthieu. In Meaux, St. Faere was held in high estimation, and before the revolution his shrine was the object of pious veneration to pilgrims from every part of France.

Besancon reveres the memory of St. Deicole, who, having founded the neighboring monastery of Lutina, died in the year 625. About the same time St. Fursus, who had become eminent for his sanctity in Ireland, having visited the court of Sigbert, King of East Anglia, and thence undertaken a pilgrimage to the tombs of the Apostles, was detained in his passage through France by Clovis the Second and his Chamberlain Erelinoald, and founded the celebrated monastery of Jagny, near Paris. Shortly afterwards his two brothers, Foilan and Uftan, having repaired, on the invitation of St. Gertrude, daughter of Pepin of Landen, to Nivelles in Brabant for the purpose of teaching the psalmody and the ceremonies of the public worship to a religious community established by that holy woman, erected the monastery of Posse, near Nivelles.

But we are not to suppose that the zeal of our Missionaries was confined within the boundaries of France and the other countries just mentioned. St. Willibrod, who, though a Saxon by birth, was educated in Ireland according to Alcuin, was the herald of the Faith to Friesland. In this undertaking he was accompanied by eleven other Priests, chosen from the monasteries of Ireland by St. Egbert, who was the first to project and urge on this mission, afterwards so fruitful in martyrs. The venerable Bede mentions two other Irish Missionaries, by name Ewald, who suffered martyrdom in Saxony about the same time. Passing over others in silence, we may mention that St. Kilian and his companions, having first visited Rome to obtain the sanction and blessing of the Pope, preached the Gospel, and shed their blood for the Faith in Franconia, and that Virgil and his disciples toiled in the conversion of the remote Carinthia, founding the celebrated church of Salzburg, and extending their labors even to the confines of Hungary. And whilst these holy men were inflamed with the desire of extending the limits of Christ's kingdom among Pagan and barbarous nations, others of their countrymen were assumed to the government of Episcopal sees that had been established from the earliest days of Christianity. Thus in Etruria and Magna Græcia we find Frigidian among the Bishops of Lucca, Cathaldus of Taranto, and Donatus of Fiesole, whilst Dungal established for himself the highest character for learning in Lombardy, refuted the errors of the Iconoclasts then springing up, and laid the foundation of some of the famous libraries with which Italy is still enriched.

It would be consoling and edifying to describe more minutely the missionary and literary labors of our forefathers in the Faith, to record the benefits conferred by them on society and religion, and thus to indulge in the feelings of Christian patriotism which the consideration of the brightest pages in our history must excite. But to do so would occupy too much time, and we shall, therefore, merely beg of you to make on the facts briefly stated one or two observations, which will suffice to show how absurd are the pretensions of modern sectaries.

First, from the statements just made, it follows that our Church was not separated in faith or communion from the other Churches of Europe; that she maintained a close commerce with them; and that her Priests and Monks were received as fellow-laborers by the Clergy beyond the seas. What a contrast with the unhappy condition of the Protestant Establishment of this realm; no ancient Church will