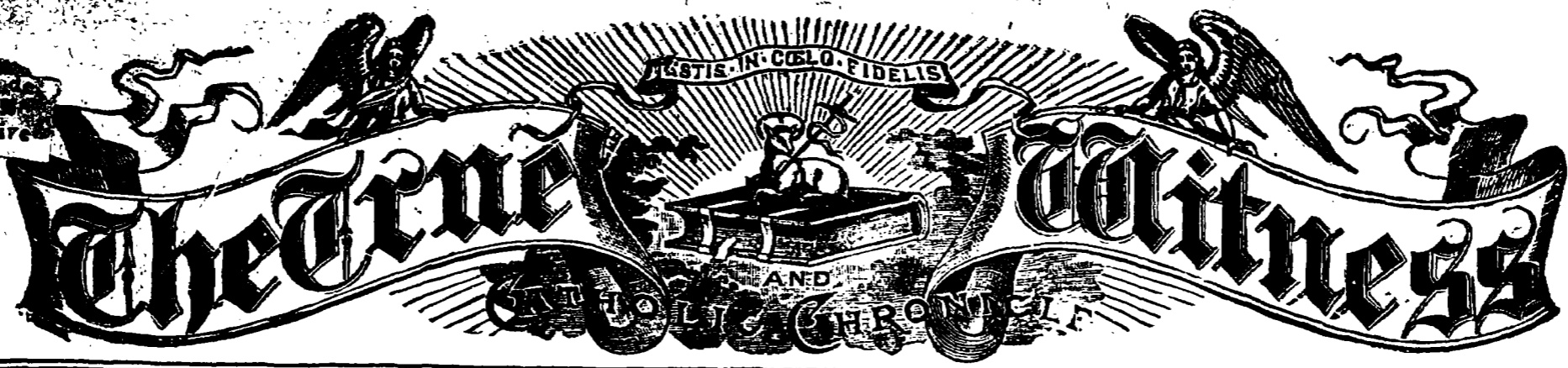


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### IMPRUDENT AND PROMISCUOUS READING.

#### Mr. Vaughan's Eloquent Sermon on Easter Sunday.

At Holy Trinity Church, Hammer-smith, London--Pernicious Books and Journals Dwelt Upon in a Spirited Manner--Some Striking Instances of Their Effects Related.

Although crowds of the faithful attended the early Masses at Holy Trinity Church, Brook Green, Hammer-smith, London, on Easter Sunday morning--the bulk of this numerous congregation performing their Easter duties--the sacred edifice was filled to overflowing during the High Mass, which was commenced punctually at 11, the celebrant being Rev. Father Roderick Grant, deacon, Rev. Father Floissac (a French priest), and sub-deacon, Rev. Father Richardson. The master of ceremonies was Mr. S. Virtue Kelly. Mozart's No. 2 Mass was beautifully rendered by the orchestra, which was under the conductorship of Mr. John Mann, Mr. Walter Madlen officiating at the organ. The altar and sanctuary were beautifully adorned with choicest season's flowers, and the scene within the pretty church was, in a word, purely and strikingly devotional. After the first Gospel the Right Rev. Mgr. John S. Vaughan ascended the pulpit and preached the first of a course of sermons as announced in the Catholic Times, and as has been the case wherever the right rev. preacher is known to deliver an address, our separated brethren are well represented, and pay most edifying attention to the weighty words which come from the lips of one deservedly acknowledged as filling a high place in the ranks of our pulpit orators. Mgr. Vaughan took for his text words from Ecclesiastes xii, 12: "Of many books there is no end," and said: Upon every side we are surrounded by the countless gifts of an all-wise and all-loving God. It is God's intention that they should all help us in various ways in the attainment of the supreme end for which we have been created. And, dear brethren in Jesus Christ, they would in very truth assist us did we always use them according to God's will. On the other hand, there is scarcely any gift which we may not in our blindness and folly abuse and convert into an occasion, if not a direct instrument, of sin. Take as a pertinent example, wine. Wine is most undoubtedly a gift from God. The Scripture itself informs us that it is given to

#### "Cheer the Heart of Man"

(Psal. ciii, 15), and that it was created from the beginning to make men joyful (Eccl. xxxi, 35). In fact we have it recorded in the Bible that Christ the Son of God even went so far as to work a great miracle in order to provide for the guests at the wedding feast at Cana. In response to Our Lady's representations He changed water into wine. Wine is therefore a genuine gift from God, and something perfectly innocent and good in itself. See how they have turned this gift into a curse and a snare! How they have diverted it from its original purpose, and by their excesses made it an occasion of drunkenness, debauchery, and sin. Who indeed will count upon the many thousands that have lost their souls through an improper use of this creature of God, which is so innocent enough. Even the best and highest gifts may be diverted from their rightful end and prostituted in the service of the devil. Take a somewhat different example, namely, the Holy Bible. In its sacred pages we possess the inspired Word of God. The Scriptures contain a veritable treasury of Heavenly Wisdom, and are a source of perennial holiness and virtue to all who use them aright. One might indeed have thought, "Well, here at least is a gift which cannot become an occasion of sin." But, alas! Poor human nature! this gift has also been sadly abused, and its abuse has led to countless miseries and to the eternal damnation of many souls. Among the

#### Hundreds of Heretical Sects

there is scarcely one that does not seek to justify its rebellion and separation from the only true and Apostolic Church by an appeal to the Bible. It is not because the Bible is devoid of holiness and truth. No! It is because man is weak, ignorant, foolish, and perverse. This is no new discovery. St. Peter himself foresaw well nigh two thousand years ago, and warned us that "the unlearned and the unstable would wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction" (2 Peter iii, 16). These are but a few instances out of thousands that might be quoted. And I call attention to them in order to convince you of the extreme care we ought to exercise in the use we make of the opportunities that come before us. These examples serve to help into a hindrance, and what should be a source of life into a source of death. That a thing is good and innocent in itself is no sort of guarantee against its being converted into an

engine of sin and spiritual destruction. What is more innocent for instance than the printing press? True. Yet the practice of

**Impudent and Promiscuous Reading** of which it is often the unconscious occasion is one of the chief sources of peril at the present day. Observe, I am not denying the immense usefulness of the art of printing, still less the advantages of a widespread and universal education. I wish merely to point out that they introduced a new set of dangers into the world. Experience proves that disastrous consequences inevitably follow when people allow themselves to read everything that comes in their way without any discrimination or self-restraint. The printing press is ever in labour. Day by day, and almost hour by hour, it keeps bringing forth fresh books and pamphlets, reviews and magazines in countless thousands. Vast streams of literature are ever flowing onward over the length and breadth of the world and penetrating into every quarter. We have good books, indifferent books, bad and the baneful all mingled together. And the reason is obvious, for

#### The Public Press Resembles a Great Trumpet

through which one is enabled to speak, not to a dozen or to a few score of persons, but to tens and hundreds of thousands. Hence every man who has anything to say, any message to deliver, any theory to ventilate, any heresy to propound, seeks to put this trumpet to his lips and spread far and wide his views and opinions, however true or however false they may be. Unhappily, what is a vehicle for the good and true is also a vehicle for the bad and the false, so that in the presence of so many different teachers the greatest discrimination is needed on the part of the listener if he is to escape contamination. Or let us represent the danger under a somewhat different figure. A sort of literary banquet lies spread out before us at the present day. The mental pabulum is of the most varied and miscellaneous kind. Every taste and every palate, however corrupt and vitiated, is catered for, so that the book stores and stalls groan under the weight of every imaginable publication, from the Bible and the Lives of the Saints on the one hand, down to the "Shilling Snockers" and the "Penny Dreadfuls" on the other. We are invited to sit down at this mental feast, and greedily enough some of us devour. Unfortunately, however, we do not always realize the poison lurking beneath some of the

#### Most Tempting and Savoury Dishes.

and will devour that which can do us no good and will probably do us much harm. The utmost care and self-restraint are needed on the part of those who partake of this banquet, or they will do themselves permanent injury by blindly yielding to natural inclinations and depraved appetites. But let us drop metaphor, and specify some of the more important dangers to which we are exposed by the habit of indiscriminate reading. In order to do this we will divide all books into two classes, viz., the good and the harmful. Of good books we need say nothing to-day, but merely set them on one side. The harmful books we divide into three categories. The first are the frivolous, the second are the immoral, and the third are the infidel and anti-religious. To the first category belong the thousands of silly tales and idle, empty stories and narratives which are not even intended to convey any instruction, or to teach any lesson, but serve merely to while away an idle hour or two, and to kill time. Books of imagination and unreality, and composed of incidents spun from the inner consciousness of some love sick poetaster, or maudlin and sentimental aesthete. There is no harm of course in using books of this class in moderation and for purposes of recreation and relaxation of mind, for they are, I am supposing, not bad in themselves. The danger is in dealing with these to excess. We know of many more, especially young ladies, both married and unmarried, who devote far too much time to this kind of trashy literature. They are continually pouring over some empty, insane and silly romance or novel. Valuable hours are wasted; real duties are neglected or only imperfectly discharged; and a thirst for

#### Light, Frothy Reading

is created, which unfit them for what is solid and serious. The palate that has accustomed itself to nothing but froth, soufflés and whipped cream turns away from the ordinary strong diet of a robust man. What we have to reprove ourselves for in these cases is that of fritting away and wasting precious hours in a manner unworthy of one who realizes the immense responsibilities of life; that time once lost never returns, and that for every idle moment a strict account will have to be rendered one day to the Sovereign Judge. To the second category of bad books belong all those which are either immoral in themselves or at least immoral in their general tones and tendency. We refer to novels and romances, whose chief attraction consists in long and minute descriptions of the tender passion. They present to us the love-sick maiden, who is of course always beautiful, young, and interesting, and her faithful, or faithless wooer, as the case may be. Then there are most barrowing scenes, and impossible dialogues, to be contemplated, while we are hurried along from chapter to chapter and invited to gaze on the most appalling and sometimes indelicate situations. And then there are graphic descriptions of courtship and coquetting and doubtful conversations, in which the

morbid curiosity and evil passions of the reader are pandered to in the most abominable way. An enormous number of such books are written, and a still more enormous number of persons are found greedily anxious to devour them. They may try and flatter themselves that they are doing themselves no harm, but in this they are practising pure self-deceit. Such writings are to many a source of real temptation; they excite the passions, they set the imagination on fire, they conjure up a thousand impure and dangerous images before the mind--those seductive spectres which are so much more easy to raise than to lay. The heart is defiled, and the senses are

#### Stirred Up and Inflamed

It is undeniable that an impure form, or an indelicate situation, especially when it is cleverly described and vividly portrayed in glowing words, will some times leave an impression on the mind for quite a long period, and assert itself at the most inopportune moments, distracting our attention even when assisting at Mass or receiving the sacraments. If, as St. Paul warned us, such things should not be so much as named amongst us as becoming assistants (Eph. v, 3) how reluctant we should be to dwell upon them deliberately and repeatedly, which is unavoidable if we read books such as I have described. Besides, such reading, by familiarizing us with sin and sensuality, and by accustoming us to gaze upon all kinds of excesses and horrors, diminishes our sense of the enormity of such crimes, and dulls the keen edge of conscience and binds us to the stern necessity of doing all in our power to avoid them. But probably the greatest peril arises from infidel books, and by infidel books we mean all those publications in which the truths of revelation are either directly or indirectly attacked. There is not the slightest doubt but that an incredible amount of harm is done by this class of literature, and especially because good and even pious persons fail to see the danger they run in reading such books, and often go so far as to deny that there is any risk at all. Again and again we have heard Catholics themselves asserting their right to read such

#### Pernicious Works.

and on what plea? "Oh," they exclaim, "if our Faith be true, we have no cause to fear what men say against it;" or, "it must be a very weak and nit-and-water sort of creed that cannot face the arguments of infidels however adverse, or that crumbles to pieces at the breath of hostile criticism;" and so on. But, dear brethren, such shallow excuses for lying into the face of danger are in sober truth but clear indications of a subtle pride and vanity, and a woeful ignorance of one's own weakness and limitation. Nothing is easier than to raise difficulties against the supernatural. Almost anyone can do that even without being a genius. It is commonly said that

#### A Fool Can Ask More Questions than a Wise Man Can Answer.

And if this be true in the case of a fool, how much more true it must be in the case of a questioner who is not a fool at all, but a shrewd and clever reasoner? To suppose that the general run of Catholics, who are for the most part without any profound knowledge of theology or philosophy, and without any regular training in dialectics, should be capable of meeting the wily sophistries of the keenest and best-practised intelligences among those who write are to be found agnostics, materialists, positivists, and other infidels of undoubted learning and ability. Men who have a command over language, and a facility and even an elegance of expression that captivates and charms the casual reader. Often they are such masters of intellectual fence, can put things in such a plausible way, and so dress up and disguise error, that with nine persons out of ten it will pass for truth. In spite of this the self-confiding and inexperienced Catholic will calmly persuade himself that he may safely read and study such writings and yet

#### It is no Risk.

I have heard quite uneducated youths, and even girls fresh from their convent schools, rushing in where angels fear to tread. To this we must in a large measure ascribe the extraordinary lax and unorthodox opinions held by not a few Catholics at the present day. Pride, and pride alone, is at the bottom of it. For what do such venturesome young persons really say? They say: "I am more than a match for all these infidels. Clever men may dress up error as though it were truth, but I shall see through them all. They may represent evil as if it were good, but no matter whatever may be the case with others I at least shall not be deceived. Oh, dear, no! Their subtleties and sophistries, their wiles and their cunning, are all unavailing before my keen and penetrating gaze. I, oh! I can see through every

#### ST. ANTHONY'S PARISH.

The work inaugurated by the United Irish Societies in organizing '98 Clubs is being successfully prosecuted. On Sunday, 20th inst., a largely attended meeting was held in St. Anthony's Parish, resulting in the formation of a '93 Club with a good membership. Officers were appointed, and every effort will be made to make the club a success. Messrs. E. J. Devlin, B.C.L., H. J. Cloran, B.C.L., and F. J. Curran, B.C.L., addressed the meeting.

### OUR IRISH LETTER.

#### Great Distress in Different Districts.

Archbishop Walsh's Letter in Regard to Bazaars for Church Purposes--The Comments of a Local Journalist.

DUBLIN, April 19.

While the horrors of famine are made known in India there is no lack of sympathy and, comparatively speaking, no lack of funds coming forward for the relief of the stricken districts. A paternal Government and a victorious Victoria look after these things before hand. Being Irish we will let the bull go. But then India is a long way off and is occasionally dangerous in the matter of frontier troubles, with a huge Muscovite bear's long reaching fore-paws always overshadowing the precipitous lane in the hills known as the Khyber Pass. Then Brahminism and Mahomedanism are religions to be studied by a learned cult. Any little interference, supposed or otherwise, must be carefully guarded against, for fear there should be a repetition of the mutiny, for fear that a perpetually oppressed people might rise in all the might of oriental savagery and endanger the thing and dearest to British hearts. The control of the commerce of the seas, the gradual accretion of power by the conquering of some small tribes and the annexation of other "protectorates" of them to build up an empire, is the real reason. There is no sentimental patriotism or process of civilization where the flag of St. George flies. It is a commercial instinct very much akin to that of the usurious Jew, and for commercial purposes only is assistance given to India when the blighting hand of famine is laid heavily on the land.

On the other hand Ireland is not a particularly picturesque point, at least not bearing the same important political relations to England's greed of empire as does the country to the south of the Himalayan Hills. Then again in Ireland they know nothing about the East or the Khron; the population is simply Catholic, and that of itself should be sufficient reason to put it without the pale of any humiliated "Asian" feeling whatsoever. No account need be taken of the reason why Irish industries were suppressed in every province except Protestant Ulster, where renegade Irishmen and apostate Scotchmen could meet on congenial ground. The children of Mammon being wiser than the children of Light was never better illustrated.

In the West the suffering was so intense that eventually the Government was forced to recognize the fact, and a large quantity of seed potatoes has been distributed to the Unions of Galway, Clifden, B. Enniskill, Killybegs, Oughterard, Westport and Swinford. A very pertinent paragraph in a Cork paper says: "It may not be too late to urge on the Government, now that they have recognized the prevalence of serious distress, the desirability of dealing with it in such a way as will give permanent relief to the people who need assistance, and put an end to the necessity for making periodical appeals for public support, because in the present circumstances of the country it is extremely unfair to cast upon the public the duty that should be discharged by the State."

In connection with this free distribution of seed, we will see why it should be confined to these Western Unions. The distress is just as acute in parts of Cork and Kerry, and there are many families living on the seaboard of both counties who have no potatoes to plant and no means whatever of obtaining them. We think the Local Government Board might do for them what it has done for the districts in the West. They are depending at present for the bare necessities of life on the grants allowed by the Mansion House Committee, and we need hardly point out that these grants will not avert the inevitable approach of famine in the winter months. As the Government have admitted the existence of distress, their policy should be to grapple with the problem in a really practical manner, and do everything in their power to prevent its recurrence. The distribution of seed potatoes is a mere temporary remedy, and when the distribution is confined to a few districts, and when it comes so late in the season, the results are bound to be unsatisfactory.

It was not altogether surprising that Archbishop Walsh should have felt himself called upon to sound a warning note in connection with some of the abuses which have of late years been creeping into the management of bazaars, the only excuse for which was that the ultimate object was good. In writing to the president of the St. Vincent de Paul Society in connection with the "Old Paris Bazaar," His Grace said:--

DEAR MR. CARTON--I trust that the coming bazaar in aid of the funds of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, in Dublin, may be in every respect a successful one. People nowadays are so easily attracted by new forms of charitable or benevolent work that I am sometimes apprehensive of a serious falling off in the support given to our old and tried charitable organizations. The poor of Dublin could ill afford any curtailment of the relief which the

generosity of the public as well as of its own members has now for so many years enabled your society to give. Apart from the substantial aid in money which it may be relied on to bring to your funds, the Bazaar will have the further advantage of keeping the society and its work from being forgotten or overlooked by the public.

You will kindly excuse my delay in writing this letter. The fact is that I have been obliged during the last few weeks to give a good deal of consideration to the question whether bazaars can any longer continue to be sanctioned as means of raising funds for Catholic purposes in this diocese. Undoubtedly abuses, some of them of a very serious kind, have been allowed to creep in within the last few years. If there is not a speedy and effective reform, it will become my duty to do what has already had to be done elsewhere by refusing altogether my sanction to bazaars, or to works, however good, in aid of which they are held.

I am very confident, however, that in connection with the projected Bazaar in aid of the St. Vincent de Paul Society there will be nothing that could tend to hasten the taking of such a step. But, I am bound to add, I am not without fear that the taking of it must be looked upon as inevitable in the near future.

#### In commenting on the above, United Ireland says:--

The Archbishop of Dublin has given some reasonable advice and warning on the subject of bazaars. His letter to the President of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul gives expression to a feeling which most lately gained a strong hold on the public mind. The abuses should arise in connection with bazaars we may be prepared to expect. But it is certainly a peril that these abuses should seem to get any colour or sanction from the mere fact that the bazaars are held in support of some good and worthy cause. To condemn the holding of bazaars would, of course, be a very extreme measure of preventing certain abuses that may arise in connection with them. But when bazaars are held in furtherance of some religious or charitable undertaking, it is especially the duty of the promoters to guard against anything which may endanger the best interests of religion.

#### THE ST. ANN'S Y. M. SOCIETY

##### Banquet Their Dramatic and Choral Sections.

The complimentary banquet tendered by St. Ann's Young Men's Society to the Dramatic and Choral Sections of that popular organization was a grand success. About seventy five persons sat down to a sumptuous repast prepared by Messrs. Welch & Rough, the well-known caterers, at their dining rooms, Notre Dame street.

Mr. R. J. Byrne presided. Rev. Father Strubbe, spiritual adviser of the society, occupied the place of honor, and to his right sat Mr. P. J. Shea, musical director of the choral section, and on his left, Mr. E. J. Quinn, chairman of the dramatic section. Letters of regret were received from Mr. M. J. F. Quinn, M.P., and Hon. Dr. Guerin, M.P.P.

#### ST. MARY'S COLLEGE.

##### A Very Interesting Public School Entertainment.

The large Academic Hall on Bleury street was, on Friday evening, the scene of a most interesting class specimen given by the little lads of the Latin Rudiments class of St. Mary's College. The parents of the pupils and the other friends of the institution, who had responded by their presence to the invitations kindly sent to them by the Faculty of the College, showed by their enthusiastic applause that whatever others might think of the system of education followed by the Jesuit Fathers, they were persuaded that no other system could produce results such as were displayed in this entertainment.

The lads went through the Latin verbs and rules of syntax with an accuracy that would be astonishing in their elders, while the declamations, Latin translations and songs were given with a finish that was surprising. Reverend Father Turgeon, the Rector of the College, congratulated them, at the end of the entertainment, on the success they had scored, and thanked them for the pleasure they had afforded to all present. His Grace Archbishop Bruchac was represented by Vicar General Racicot.

#### CATHOLIC SAILORS' CLUB.

##### The Friends of the Boys in Blue

Hold a Most Successful Entertainment. Hon. Mr. Justice Curran Delivers an Address.

The first entertainment of the season in behalf of the Catholic Sailors' Club was held at the Victoria Armoury Hall last week. It was under the auspices of the Ladies of St. Patrick's parish and was a great success.

During the evening Mr. Justice Curran, in the course of an interesting address, said that a most mistaken idea was prevalent with reference to the influence of men in affairs generally. Man was spoken of as the head of creation and many men believed they could lord it as they pleased. The fact is that the ladies control the situation. He was a living instance of the truth of his assertion. He had come to the conclusion that his speech-making days were over and that he was to be permitted to enjoy his ottoman cum dignitate, but Lady Hingston had decreed it otherwise and he found himself bound to make his bow before the inevitable. It was a pleasure nevertheless as well as an honor to be permitted to have a small share in the good work of which that distinguished lady is the president. He did not wish to be understood that he was forgetting the excellent work done by others. The movement for establishing a club for the Catholic sailors had originated with Mr. Walsh and a few of his not wealthy but most enthusiastic and self-sacrificing friends. Just as the great temperance movement owed its origin to the philanthropic Quaker whose urgent appeals had induced Father Mathew to throw himself into the cause, so many of the greatest boons conferred upon our kind had an obscure origin, even the fruits of earnest but humble workers, whose names might be forgotten, but whose zeal had inspired others to take up the good work they had inaugurated. So it is with the Catholic Sailors' Club; its future success depends upon Lady Hingston and those now associated with her, but she and they are happy to acknowledge that the first steps were taken by Mr. Walsh and his zealous friends. The doors of this institution are open to men of all creeds, but any one with practical experience of life will acknowledge that this club will reach many and confer inestimable benefits upon them, who without it would not seek them elsewhere. The club is not antagonistic to any other institution; on the contrary, if any sister organization the promoters say God speed; there is room enough for all to do good and unfortunately room to spare. He would not rehearse what each one could read in the annual report of the club. It was gratifying to find, however, that the last year had been the most prosperous and prolific in good results of any since its inauguration. There is an appeal in that report for assistance. Unfortunately, since its appearance events have taken a turn which all lovers of peace must deeply regret. Should hostilities break out, as now appears inevitable, between the United States and Spain, our port would be visited by a much larger number of seamen engaged in the mercantile service than in any former year. The calls upon the resources of the club would be greatly increased and every friend of the sailor should be ready to make a little pecuniary sacrifice so as to enable the good ladies and their friends to do the work efficiently and secure for their proteges those safeguards against the allurements and temptations that a club of this kind affords in so high a degree. The movement set upon foot here in the establishment of this institution had attracted the attention of friends abroad, and the hope is entertained that before many years the globe may be encircled with a strong chain of prosperous Catholic Sailors' Clubs. In the name of the ladies and gentlemen present he begged to extend the heartiest best wishes for the continued success of their undertaking, and to thank all concerned in this good work for the labors and sacrifices that they had imposed upon themselves in the past.

#### PROGRAMME:

- Chorus--"The Meeting of the Waters"
- Tenor Solo--"Faust"..... Mr. J. J. Rowan.
- Soprano Solo--"A City by the Sea"..... Miss Nellie McAndrew.
- Solo and Chorus--"Jack's the Boy"..... Mr. F. Cahill and Choir.
- Reading--"The Catholic Psalm"..... Rev. J. A. McCallen.
- Address--"The Catholic Sailors' Club"..... Hon. Judge Curran.
- Chorus--"La Traviata"..... Mr. Cowan.
- Bass Solo--"Trusting in You"..... Mr. Cowan.
- Quartet--"The Geisha"..... Miss McAndrew, Miss Nellie McAndrew, Mr. Rowan and Mr. Carpenter.
- Chorus--"God Save Our Native Land."

The Blessed Virgin is invoked by us as the Mother of Christ. What is the force of thus addressing her? It is to bring before us that she it is who from the first was prophesied of, and associated with the hopes and prayers of all men, of all true worshippers of God; of all who looked for the redemption of Israel in every age before the redemption came.--Newman.