

TOPICS...

For Irish Catholics.

While we are opposed, in principle, to that species of patronage by class and creed measure which obtains in Canada to-day, and, while we firmly believe in the individual qualifications of candidates for positions constituting the only standard of appointment, still, for the present, we must accept things as they are, and hope for the day when a more beneficial and equitable system will be adopted. But since it is inevitably the class and creed method that has to be considered, we feel that the Irish Catholic element should have its proportionate share in the benefits distributed by the hands of the Government. In selecting judges, officers of the civil service, and all others who are called upon to fill public functions and to be paid by the country, it is the census of the various districts, or provinces, that constitutes the basis of action and determines the decisions of the Government. Since the present session has opened, at Ottawa, we have been vainly awaiting some action in this regard, on the part of Irish Catholic representatives in the House. We had hoped that, from one side or other of the chamber would come questions, or resolutions concerning the classification of the Irish Catholics in the general census of the country. There is not a denunciation of Protestantism that is not carefully classified, so that the public can tell at a glance how many Presbyterians, Anglicans, Baptists, etc., are to be found in each Province. There is certainly the classification of "Roman Catholics"; but that is too general to be beneficial, it includes French, Irish, English, Scotch and all other Catholics. There is nothing in the census to tell us how many Irish Catholics there are in Quebec Province, in Montreal city, or in any other section or division of the Dominion.

Let us take an example to illustrate our meaning. Here is an important office that becomes vacant. There are various applicants for the position. We will suppose them all to be equally qualified. The first question that unhappily suggests itself, is this: "is it the turn of a Protestant or of a Catholic?" If a Protestant's turn, the nomination goes to a Protestant; if a Catholic's turn, the nomination goes to a French Catholic. Then comes the question of race. If it be an English-speaking person's right, it goes to an English-speaking Protestant; if it be a Frenchman's right, it goes to a French Canadian Catholic. In either case, whether that of creed or nationality, the Irish Catholic does not figure at all. As a Catholic he is swamped by the more numerous French Catholic element; as an English-speaking person he is lost in the more powerful influence of the English Protestant element. And what can he do about it? Very little since the census of the country has not classified him in a special manner, and since he is considered officially as being one of the Protestant category, when there is question of language, and one of the French category when there is question of creed. This may seem a very simple matter; but it certainly is simple of us not to have long since, through our representatives, secured a proper classification in the Dominion census. We hope that this simple hint may not be given in vain, and that when the next census will be taken, the Irish-Catholic will find his fellow-countrymen and co-religionists set down in such a manner as to allow of no misconception regarding their numbers or classes.

Were one generation of men to be endowed with the gift of perpetual youth, and another generation to be without need of representation, it might not be necessary to touch upon the present question. But unfortunately, it is ordained that men shall succeed men, that the boy of to-day will be the man of to-morrow, and the man of to-day will be the old man of the near future. While the practical experience and the wisdom and judgment of the men who have for years represented the people—we speak now of the Irish Catholics of this city—are most valuable, still their day must inevitably pass, and members of a rising generation must suc-

ceed them. Yet, those young men have become so accustomed to depend upon the older ones, that they do not take that practical interest in public affairs, which is absolutely necessary to qualify them for positions that must some day become vacant. They seem to wait, in silent and inactive confidence, the disappearance of the older element, before they ever dream of preparing themselves to carry on the work that, in the interests of their people, must be prosecuted.

In this matter we make no reference to individuals, nor to individual cases.

For these reasons, amongst others, we would deem it wise if the younger generation commenced by having one of its intelligent, studious, and earnest members, enter the arena and, side by side, with one of the experienced and older generation, begin to do battle for the cause of his section of the city. From the older representative he could derive knowledge and practice in the work of ably and intelligently fighting for the recognition of his immediate electors; and the older representatives would have his youthful vigor, his systematic study of municipal problems, and his enthusiasm to support in every important movement to be made. Find such a young man; no matter how poor he may be, or how unsatisfactorily circumstances, but find him all the same. There are a score of them, many of whom do not even suspect their own abilities. Once such a person is found, rally around him; aid him materially; make it worth his while to devote his talents, his study, his observation, his latent abilities to the popular cause; elect him despite even his own unwillingness, if necessary; and you will not only have a powerful auxiliary for your older representative, but you will have guaranteed the rising generation that when their turn comes to be the men of the day, their interests will be taken care of and their future assured.

It seems to us that the leaders in the various parishes might easily help in this bringing to the front some talented young man, or men, whose modesty, timidity, or indifference may, otherwise, forever keep in the back ground. If they would marshal their forces and systematically go to work, we know that their experience would discover the desired party; and once such discovery made it would be the duty of all to help in bringing that chosen one to the front.

In the last issue of the "True Witness" reference was made to the efforts, of some of Mayor Prefontaine's enthusiastic friends, to boom him for another two year term. It was also pointed out that the next term of the Chief Magistrate of Montreal belongs, by right of custom, to an Irish Catholic. It would be well, therefore, if the pastors and the parishioners of our five Irish parishes lost no time in conferring together as to the selection, for this important office which will be vacant in March next, of a candidate who will be thoroughly acceptable to them, and who will not be enforced to incur the heavy expenditure associated with an election. This is a mere suggestion on the part of the writer. It is, however, sufficient to enable our people to realize the importance of selecting a suitable and acceptable candidate for the mayoralty, before the wire-pullers of another race or another religion choose a man who would not be acceptable to the majority of the Irish electors. The pastors and parishioners of the five Irish parishes should nominate the candidate for this most important office and it is not at all too early to begin the important task.

It may be remarked that the next occupant of the Mayor's chair will have important duties to discharge in connection with the closing of the present century and the ushering in of the new one. It is therefore of the greatest importance that clergy and people should unite and select the most competent man in Irish circles. A unanimous nomination will ensure an election by acclamation.

GREAT CONFLAGRATIONS.

What a terrible element is fire! Its all devouring powers are too often manifested in examples that cause the hurried world to pause and shudder. What truth in Poe's description of the fire-bells!

"Hear the loud alarm bells,
Brazen bells!
How they ring out their fright,
On the startled ear of night!"

Like in the case of epidemics there appears to be certain periods when the news of frightful calamities comes with astounding repetition. It was only a few days ago that we referred of the fatal conflagration of the Windsor Hotel, in New York; the same city was again cast into consternation by the fire in Wallace C. Andrew's home and that of A. J. Ad-

ams, which took place on Friday last. Fully a dozen lives were lost, and the damage done to property is yet beyond calculation.

While we were reading the details of this second terrible visitation in the empire city, we had but to cast an eye upon another column of the same paper and learn of a hundred thousand and dollar fire in Garth's Metal works, in this city, and of the injury of one of our brave firemen. And all this time the ashes are still smouldering upon the debris of the St. Lawrence street stores, and four firemen are suffering the consequences of their attempts to save the property.

While we record with sorrow and sympathy for the sufferers, in all these cases, the details of the unfortunate events we cannot withhold an expression of admiration for the men whose lives are constantly at the service of their fellow men, and whose

duties demand that they be ever prepared to accept all risks of a personal nature, in the noble work of guarding the lives and property of their fellow-citizens. The firemen are often subjected to severe, and generally, unjust criticism. It must not be forgotten that while we sleep calmly in our beds at night they are awake and ready at a call, to rush to our rescue if a sudden danger menaces. The petty stipend which they draw is insignificant when compared to the responsibilities and perpetual dangers of their position. We trust that for a long time to come we may be spared the necessity of recording any other great, and especially fatal fires, but even when freed from the dangers of such a terrible element, we must not forget that, the firemen are not sleeping, nor resting, but keeping up that "eternal vigilance," which is the only guarantee of public safety.

THE PAPACY IN HISTORY

In your last issue your correspondent, Wm. Ellison, gave your readers some very interesting items of Quebec news, and amongst others, referred briefly to Rev. Father Henning's address on "The Papacy in History." As this was truly a noteworthy lecture, and one that attracted one of the largest audiences ever seen, on such an occasion, in our Academy of Music, I thought you might wish to publish some of the leading features of the address.

It was thus the Rev. Father commenced—

"In the Roman catacombs there used to hang a lamp. This lamp had the form of a ship. St. Peter was represented at the helm of this miniature ship steering the vessel with one hand, and holding the other aloft in the act of blessing. On one side of this little ship were inscribed the words: 'I have prayed for thee.' There could not be my dear friends, a more appropriate symbol of the Church of Jesus Christ and of the Papacy than this miniature ship, which served to light up the dark passages of the gloomy catacombs. The Church is a ship designed and constructed by the Son of God. At its helm he has placed St. Peter and his successors to guide this ship from one part of the earth to the other, in order that this ship may carry the light of faith, and with it the inestimable blessings of Christian civilization, and he has prayed for St. Peter and his successors, that they may never fail in the fulfilment of this task that has been imposed by him on them. The Papacy is, I might say, the grandest and the most imposing fact in the whole history of the Christian era. It is a fact that is permanent, a fact that repeats itself constantly; a fact appearing and appearing again and again on the records of time; a fact entering into the concerns of all the nations of the earth, and benefitting directly or indirectly all the parts of that vast organization, which we call human society. We cannot deny the existence of this fact, simply because we cannot withdraw from the influence of the Papacy. It has always remained true to the symbols of the catacombs carrying light and blessing to every part of the earth, to the north and to the south, to the east and to the west, from ocean to ocean and from pole to pole. When we consider history in its true meaning we must define it as the record of the details of Divine Providence in human society. It is only in human society that man finds the completion of his intellectual and moral development. Therefore human society must always remain under the guidance of Divine Providence, and that all facts of history must be judged in that light. To interpret history in any other light is to misunderstand it. It is to make of history an explicable enigma. Why, for instance, should nations rise and fall again after a little while, why should dynasties begin to exist, and after a short period be wiped out of existence. Why should empires, and kingdoms and republics gradually develop their apparently inexhaustible resources, until they have reached the very height of wealth, power and influence, and then rush down the incline of decrepitude until they are annihilated? Why all these changes in the history of the world? We cannot explain them, unless we admit the hand of divine Providence, disposing of things in the world for the gaining of man's last end. Now, reviewed in this light in the light of Divine Providence, regulating the affairs of human society, I maintain that the Papacy is the grandest and the most imposing fact in history. Just as the planets derive their movement from the sun, which is the centre around which they move just as all the developments of the Christian era derive their power, their intelligent understanding from the Papacy. Many do not understand this truth. Others will not admit it. Others again will war upon it, but

it is a truth all the same. All the evils of which the world is possessed have their origin from a two-fold source. They spring from a two-fold root, namely, ignorance and depravity. The one corrupts the intellect, and the other rots the heart. These two roots of evil come into the world with ourselves. They are an unhappy heirloom which is attached to our human nature. Every man that is born into this world has an inclination to ignorance, and if this is allowed, it will gain full possession of him, unless counteracted by some external force. Every man that comes into the world, comes into it inclined to wickedness, and, as the poet says, he is always inclined to do that which is forbidden, and seeks that which is denied him. Now, if this is true, and you know that it is true, then it follows that to bring about the amelioration of man it is necessary to remove as far as possible this two-fold root of evil. Remove from the mind of man ignorance and give him truth. Put that truth on a basis which can never be shaken, so that there is no room for doubt, no room for hesitation, so that error becomes an impossibility, and you have removed one great source of evil in the world."

After a vivid picture of Rome, as it was two thousand years ago, under the sway of Paganism, with its wealth, its pleasures, its cruelty, its tyrants, and its immoralities, the lecturer said that St. Peter found he had to infuse life into this carcass of society, and he thus continued:—

"Peter, when he came to Rome, found that Rome was the focus of all the vices of the then known world. Peter put his hand to the plough and never once did he look back. For twenty years he labored, for twenty years he suffered, and at the end of twenty years his great work was accomplished. He had laid the foundations of a new Rome, and so great was this accomplishment that St. Paul wrote in his epistle:—'I thank my God that your faith is spoken of in the whole world.' So successful was this accomplishment that 300 years of the bloodiest persecutions could not undo this work. Peter died; Peter was crucified; Peter breathed out his life on the cross. Two hundred and sixty-seven popes have followed in one continuous unbroken chain since then, and everyone of them has ever endeavored to bring to the world the blessings of civilization. To the Pope it is due that missionaries were sent to all parts of Europe in order to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and thus to lay the foundations of Christian civilization. As soon as anyone wishes to lay the foundations of a religious order, the first thing that comes into his mind is to go to Rome, to lay the rules at the feet of the Pope. If they receive the Pope's sanction, well and good, that order exists, but if the Pope withholds his sanction that order is annihilated and does not exist. A great many of the Popes themselves were members of religious orders, and these were not only instruments in the hands of the Popes for the conversion of nations, but they were also instruments in the hands of Popes for the promotion of education. As soon as the hand of persecution was removed from the church she immediately commenced to further the interests of education. There was not a convent, a parish church throughout the whole length and breadth of Europe, to which there was not attached a school. Not a school for the children of the nobility, but for the poor. These children not only received their education in these schools, but they were fed and clothed in them, when their parents were unable to supply them their natural wants.

Nowhere in the world will you find a library like the Vatican library. It is to the Popes that we owe the great universities of Italy, of France, of Spain, of England, and of Germany. It is to the Popes that we owe so

many schools. It is also to the Pope that we owe the civilization of Europe, and it is to the Pope that we owe popular education. And as the Popes have preserved letters, so have they preserved arts in Europe. If architecture, sculpture, and painting exist in Europe as arts to-day we owe it to the Papacy. Where does the student of art naturally turn, when he desires to fill his soul with the grand and beautiful. Where does he turn? Is it to London, or is it to Paris, or is it to one of the great cities of this continent? Oh, no, when the student of art wishes to fill his soul with the ideals of art he goes to Rome. The great principle held up by the Papacy, is that before the law of nature, and before the face of God, "All men are equal." This principle is based upon the unity of the human race, the descent of all men from one common father and one common mother. It is sufficient to make the hair of every Christian stand on end to read in history of how the pagans treated their slaves. I will not shock your sensibilities tonight by describing the pleasures of the masters to see their slaves cast living into their fish ponds for the fishes. I will not shock your sensibilities by describing how 10,000 and 20,000 slaves at a time had to struggle one another to death in the amphitheatre for the amusement of the public. The abolition of all this inhuman conduct, too terrible to describe, is due to the Papacy. They did not destroy thousands of men to accomplish this end; they did not send armies into the countries where slavery existed; they did not make widows and orphans in whole hordes to abolish slavery. The Pope convinced the master and the slave that they were brothers. That they were created by the same God, that they were redeemed by the same Christ, that they were sanctified by the same Holy

Ghost, and that they had before them the same glorious end to gain. In that case they were brothers, the Popes not only deserve honor for having abolished slavery, but they deserve it a hundred-fold more for the manner in which it was done, as it was accomplished without wrong to anyone.

The reverend gentleman quoted several most interesting and praiseworthy passages from most commendable articles written by famous Protestant historians regarding the Papacy. He dwelt at length on the protection given by the Popes to the marriage bond, the many difficulties which had arisen between the reigning pontiffs of long ago and the kings, depicting in a most vivid manner the many heroic acts, and the strict maintenance to the laws of the Church, even at their own peril, by the Holy Fathers. He referred particularly to King Henry VIII's departure from the Church on the Pope having refused him permission to marry Anne Boleyn.

The lecturer then went on to say: I might sum up the work of the Papacy in the following—The Papacy is the foundation of true civilization; the Papacy has brought blessings and true education all over the earth; the Papacy has fostered the higher education by the establishment of universities all over Christendom; the Papacy has preserved letters by preserving literature; the Papacy has inaugurated and preserved the treasures of art; the Papacy has never failed in its peaceful efforts, in its abolition of human slavery. This is what the Papacy has done in history.

Rev. Father Henning concluded his eloquent address by an appeal to his hearers to try to imitate the love which the Irish nation always had for the Papacy.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

Capital punishment is not the pleasantest thing in the world to discuss; but so long as murderers disgrace the face of the earth, so long will the death penalty remain a question not only to be discussed in the abstract, but to be enforced legally.

There have been many plausible reasoners who have devoted all energies to prove that capital punishment was a remnant of barbarism; that killing within the law was no more justifiable than killing without the law, that two wrongs did not make a right, etc. These people are working on a false basis and entangle their arguments in the meshes of bad reasoning, a mistaken idea of humanitarianism and a total obliviousness to things necessary for the protection of society and the safety of life.

Our esteemed contemporary "The Providence Visitor" in dealing with the subject in a recent issue said—

The public sense of the justice of capital punishment is sometimes obscured by sentimental considerations, and there is a tendency to look upon crime as the manifestation of disease rather than of moral obliquity. It is calmly assumed that no man or woman can commit murder unless under the stress of temporary insanity, emotional insanity or hereditary taint. Facts, on the contrary indicate that this is too high a view to take of human nature, and that, even in the most civilized communities there is a deal of latent savagery which, if not restrained by suitable pains and penalties, would work ruin to society. There are those who think that the prevention of crime can be as well or more effectually attained by milder sanctions. Perhaps an inquiry into the number of murderers undergoing life sentences at Cranston might point to different conclusions. The recent execution of Mrs. Place was publicly endorsed by her spiritual adviser and was published opposed, unless we are in error, by only one of the ministers of New York. That execution went far to atone for the outbreak of sentimentalism which was responsible for the acquittal of Marie Barberi.

The nineteenth century is one of progress and enlightenment. We pride

ourselves in our Christian civilization and all that sort of thing. And yet the frequency of deeds of bloodshed are familiar to all who read the daily newspapers. Our Christian civilization, to judge by results, is curiously lacking in moral sense. The appalling thing about crime is the example it gives. The only preventive is the supreme penalty. Imprisonment, especially in view of humanity of modern prison management, does not create a sufficient impression. The hour of revenge will cheerfully be purchased at the cost of years of prison life. It is, moreover, the only just penalty for the wanton taking away of human life.

"Take not the life that cannot give," says the Persian proverb. Yes, if taking of life be wanton and without warrant. The question at issue is this. Does the "right of the sword" trespass upon the rights of God? Does God's law allow it?

The testimony of the Scriptures ought, to begin with, to be conclusive for worshippers of the Scriptures. In the next place, the right of the sword is a universal tradition of the human race. The conclusion to which this fact points is obvious. Again jurists agree that civil society has the right to use the means necessary for its preservation. God, the founder of society, must be supposed to have given it powers requisite for its maintenance. The right to inflict capital punishment for crimes which are a menace to the social well being cannot therefore be renounced by the State and its abolition by law only makes the power to inflict it latent, and even though the State consisted of God fearing, law abiding citizens the right of the sword could never be dispensed with. It is inherent in the social scheme. St. Thomas says that every individual stands to the entire community as a part of the whole. Therefore if any man be dangerous to the community the execution of him for the common good is praiseworthy and wholesome.

It must be borne in mind that although the death of a criminal is a satisfaction to society and a means of preservation, still the principal and predominate idea is the idea of chastisement, of penalty, and of justice.

ST. GABRIEL'S T. A. AND B. SOCIETY

The regular monthly meeting of St. Patrick's T. A. and B. Society was held immediately after Vespers, Sunday, April 9th.

The meeting was opened by the usual religious exercises in the church, which were conducted by the Rev. President, Rev. J. A. McCallen, S.S., who administered the pledge to a good number.

Mr. John Walsh, presided at the business meeting which was held subsequently in the hall adjoining the church. Several new members were

admitted to the Society. There was a very large attendance of the members present, and a considerable amount of business was transacted.

A sincere vote of thanks was tendered to the following ladies and gentlemen, who took part in the entertainment in honor of the anniversary of the Society, on Easter Tuesday evening: Miss Nellie McAndrew, Miss S. Jackson, the Misses Coughlin, Prof. J. A. Fowler, Messrs. Geo. A. Carpenter, Jas. Kennedy, J. I. McCaffrey, R. F. Raddy, F. J. Hogan, Prof. Coombes, and the members of the Schubert Octet.

The vote of thanks was moved by Mr. M. Sharkey, and seconded by Mr. Jas. Milloy, and when put to the meeting was carried unanimously.