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THURSDAY, MARCH 5TH, 1908.

ASH WEDNESDAY.

Singularly cold must be the heart and narrow the mind that is not impressed by the ceremony of the blessing and distribution of ashes, which gives the name, Ash Wednesday, to the first day of Lent. The handful of coal black ashes, which are all that remains of the palms which charmed all eyes by their majestic beauty on Palm Sunday—the reminder of our mortality conveyed in the prayers used in blessing them, “We know that we are but ashes and for the demerits of our wickedness must return to dust”—the words addressed to young and old as they gather round the altar to receive these ashes on their foreheads: “Remember, O man, that dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return”—are calculated to impress even on the most thoughtless the vanity of earthly things, the folly of a butterfly existence, the importance of laying up treasures in Heaven. There is something thrilling in that touch of death's chrism on the brow, and in the thought that it is for many a veritable anointing unto death, a forewarning of what is presently to come, a brush of the wings of the Angel of Death as he passes along these ranks and marks out those first on his roll.

Frivolity instinctively shrinks from Ash Wednesday as it does from the whole Lenten season. And there can be no higher testimony than this to the power of the Church's ceremonies and observances, no more pointed refutation of the shallow calumny that her rites and fasts are a mere cleaning of the outside of the dish. It is well, it is necessary, that the outside of the dish should be cleaned. But the most casual observer, unless he be of the kind that cannot or will not see, assisting at the ceremonies of Ash Wednesday, could not help feeling that it is something which appeals profoundly to the heart, which teaches humility, detachment, penance, more eloquently than could mere words.

All, however, is not sadness in the service of Ash Wednesday. The Church indeed teaches her children in a startlingly expressive way the lesson of their nothingness—the lesson of the sad results of sin. But she does not leave us in the dust. She never abases, but to raise us. Hence in the Gospel of that day she conducts us in spirit to Heaven, shows us how we can lay up treasures there, points out to us Him Who conquered death and consoles us with the assurance that from the gloom of the grave shall break forth the glory of immortality.

A FIT SUBJECT FOR INVESTIGATION.

The Toronto Globe of Feb. 28th reports a case of alleged cruelty and breach of contract which demands strict investigation. Eight Hungarian laborers were found wandering at midnight along Toronto Bay front and were gathered into Court street police station by a kindly patrol sergeant. There, together with shelter, food was supplied to the famished and footsore strangers. One of their party, who could speak a little English, explained the cause of their predicament. They had tramped all the way from Driftwood City, over a hundred miles north of Cobalt, the trip stretching over some six weeks. They begged food and shelter on their way with varying success, and sometimes slept in the bush. What hardships they endured during those weeks of the most rigorous weather we have had in years can be but faintly imagined by those who have not wrestled on foot with snow-drifts in a temperature 30 degrees below zero.

This is the explanation of how they came to make this awful journey. They were hired to work at \$1.75 a day for six months in the lumber camps. One of them produced a written contract dated Nov. 22nd, 1907, to that effect. They claim that they were charged exorbitant prices for supplies and board, and in the middle of January were sent adrift, as there was no longer any work for them.

Such a state of affairs demands the most rigid examination. If conditions be as described, it would be a disgrace to humanity to permit those who brought them about to go unpunished. There is only too much reason to believe that the eagerness of some railroad and other contractors to employ for-

eigners who do not speak English is that these can be bullied, held up, recklessly exposed to danger, cheated with comparative impunity. In their case sanitary precautions can be set at defiance, extortionate rates can be charged for board and supplies, life-saving precautions can be neglected, contracts violated, with comparative impunity. If a few Hungarians are killed or frozen or felled, who is there to make a protest?

We talk of the lawlessness of certain cliques of immigrants from Central and Southern Europe, and we are determined to put down the same by rigorous measures. Let us do so by all means. But let us at the same time get after the thieving, slave-driving, brutal railroad and shanty boss.

HEROISM OF COUNTY CLARE, IRELAND, FISHERMEN.

The annals of human bravery record no finer example than that of the fisher folk whose heroism is described in the circular published elsewhere in this issue, who rescued the crew of the French ship Leon XIII. from the raging waters of the Atlantic on the morning of Oct. 2nd, 1907. Only those who know something of that iron-bound coast where the ill-fated vessel was driven on the rocks of the towering cliffs of flint which rise perpendicularly in many places for hundreds of feet and from which huge masses of rock have been hurled into the waters beneath, and have heard the roar, sometimes audible for forty miles landward, with which the waters of the Atlantic stirred up to fury by the tempest, sweeping without a break from the shores of Newfoundland, precipitate themselves against those cliffs, can properly appreciate the sublime courage of the Quilty fishermen and the skill and strength which enabled them without the loss of a single life, to propel their canoes over such a sea and bring every soul aboard the wrecked vessel safely to shore. It was an achievement to which only the splendid physical strength which the poverty of the Irish peasant has not been able to undermine, the ruggedness and skill acquired by daily battle with the waves, the animation which only a keen sense of God's protection for those working for God's sake could raise, and characteristically the only testimonial to their bravery these fishermen desire is a house where they can worship God—a modest temple, before the altar of which they can kneel ere facing the angry waters from which they draw their sustenance—a church whose bell shall send its Angelus call over the waves to them as they ply their nets, and whose cross shall beckon them homeward after a toilsome day. We trust that our readers, especially those who claim historic Clare as their birth-place, will aid in raising an edifice which shall be at the same time a worthy memorial of an act of unsurpassed heroism and an incentive to the piety in which such heroism has its roots.

FOREIGN-BORN THUGGERY.

Our article demanding a rigid investigation into the treatment of some Hungarians who recently found shelter and food in one of our police stations shows that we are actuated by no narrow spirit in our remarks on foreign-born thuggery. We demand fair play for every man amongst us irrespective of race. But this demand rests on the corresponding obligation of good behavior. The man who expects fair play must play fairly.

That this last condition is not lived up to in some quarters, is evident from reports of murders, stabbings, blackmail, which have been recently appearing in our papers with alarming frequency. The Mayor of Winnipeg found it necessary to have his house guarded within the last few days, because of a threat to blow it up unless he paid a large amount of money to a gang of terrorists. Some half a dozen murders have stained the criminal calendar of Montreal in a brief period. Outrageous cases of stabbing in one of which a poor old woman was the victim, have occurred right here in Toronto. We need not refer to the awful instance of sacrilegious murder which has sent a shudder through the North American Continent.

The indignation aroused by these outbreaks of murderous lawlessness has been voiced in a motion or resolution moved in our Senate to shut out altogether immigrants of the nationality responsible for this series of crimes. This would certainly be an extreme measure, which would bear hard on tens of thousands of industrious, law-abiding, kindly citizens. But if extreme measures are to be avoided, the law-abiding elements of the Latin race both here and in their native land, must make strenuous efforts to put down thuggery. The stabber, the blackmailer, the assassin, are developments for which this country will not stand. Already Montreal has inflicted severe penalties on any foreigners found with concealed weapons. The right of search is rigidly exercised. So far, so good.

But there is need of exemplary severity in dealing with cases of stabbing. Together with a long term of imprisonment a thorough application of the lash ought to be administered to the cowards guilty of this offence. In the case of blackmail every member of a blackmailing fraternity is morally and legally guilty of the

crime committed by the agency of individual emissaries and should be punished equally with the actual perpetrators. The same rule holds good with regard to assassination. If the bomb and bullet organizations were made to feel that their lives would be the forfeit for any loss of life brought about by their tools—that not the tools alone but those behind them, would be punished—there would soon be a pause to their activity. Thugs are essentially cravens, and to all such the award of the craven should be meted out.

OFFICIAL TREACHERY IN FRANCE.

A short time ago a commission of investigation deputed to report upon the causes of an explosion which inflicted great damage on a French warship made severe and disquieting comments on the state of naval discipline. Since that time instances of official treachery in France have again and again received publicity. And within the last week a despatch informs the world that an officer occupying a position of the most confidential character has been convicted of trying to dispose of military secrets of the highest moment. There is no doubt that the recent action of the French Government is as insane from the standpoint of patriotism as it is sacrilegious from that of religion. The men whose motto is “neither God nor master” will be governed by one rule of conduct, namely, the gratification of their passions to the sacrifice of everything for these. Like the craving of the flesh, everything is a mere organic sensation, and the only consideration is what craving will give most pleasure in its gratification.

There is every reason to believe that if France be some day confronted with a sudden crisis there will be revealed such a condition of dishonesty, treachery, rottenness, as will make the decaying condition of the Empire of Pagan Rome pale by comparison. We do not say that things have by any means as yet reached that stage, but there are no uncertain indications that they are fast approaching it.

UNION IN IRELAND.

There is general rejoicing that the long existing feuds and misunderstandings amongst the distinguished men of the Irish party are at length at an end. The products of the union are not yet apparent to any great extent, but that they will come without any possibility of doubt is the conviction that cheers the sons of Ireland and their descendants the world over.

The wisdom which brought about the uniting of the forces is an arguement for wisdom in the formulating and carrying out plans for the country and people towards which all the labors tend. Every division in the ranks heretofore meant a distribution and scattering of energies, some of which acted directly in opposition to others. Hence it is clear that a waste was ever present, and results doubtful. While all sections in the past were evidently actuated by good intentions, it is only now they have shown a full realization of the truth that forces which act in different directions, even though propelled by the best intentions in the world, will never reach the same ultimate goal.

The modern evolution of Ireland has been marked by many changes, punctuated by certain distinct and epoch-making events. Of such a nature is the late amalgamation of the forces under their judicial and strong leader Redmond. Union amongst the Irish members at Westminster means practically that they hold the situation largely in their own hands. To retain this depends altogether upon a continuance of present conditions.

Hostile journalists are predicting dissensions and a return to cross-purposes; it is even possible that these dissensions being in non-existence, attempts may be made to create them, but amongst those who view the situation from the point of Ireland's well-wisher the optimistic view is uppermost and an enthusiastic belief in a continuance of the present hopeful outlook is the one that generally prevails.

With this in view the coming celebration of Ireland's Patron Saint will be entered into with the most cheering disposition. Every recurring St. Patrick's Day brings with it a re-awakening of hope, the virtue to which the children of Erin are most prone, and without which they would long since have fallen into the abyss which always awaits the despairing. All too often has this hope been blighted, now, however, without leaving ourselves open to the charge of being over sanguine, it seems safe to assert that a lasting compact has been made and that the strong things of unity will be the issue.

THE MERIT OF CATHOLIC POETRY.

The Catholic Universe is to fore with a lengthy quotation from the British Whig a secular paper—the gist of which is, that the only sincere spiritual poetry of the day is written by those who claim membership with the Catholic Church.

This is an encouraging statement, one, too, which it will take many of us some time to fully digest and concur in, for so imbued are we owing to surrounding influences with the

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minor merit of our writers both in prose and poetry, that the assertion of their value has to come from some outside source in order to rouse us to an appreciation of its truth. The “British Whig” seems to have seen more deeply than even Catholics themselves, into those wells from which springs the real poetic sentiment, when it says: “If there is any field of literature in which Catholic writers should excel, it is certainly in the expression of spiritual feeling and aspiration.” When poems appear in our Catholic papers from our own writers, what is the usual attitude of our reception of them? We receive them tolerantly and with an encouraging smile it is true, but the idea that they may be of any real literary value seldom enters our mind. Let those same poems appear in a secular journal or paper, and we immediately conclude that merit must be a factor of the productions, otherwise they would not have been accepted by the non-Catholic publication.

Among the reasons given by the British Whig as ground for the justness of its estimate regarding Catholic verification, is that “poetry without God has no value and halting and uninspired a message that it is not heard above the din of the marketplace,” and as a proof that the only surety respecting God is found in the Catholic Church, the article says “the contagion of doubt and self-sufficiency has made the poet outside the Church as uncertain as the scientist in his perception of spiritual truths.”

Here is the whole thing in a nutshell. What is it that forms the inspiration of any declaration written on vocal? Is it not the conviction possessed by the writer or speaker, that the thing that he states is true. Apply this to spiritual poetry and who are they best fitted to produce it? In the words of the British Whig we must find them amongst those who are attached “to that source which is freshened and renewed from age to age by a Living Presence which keeps belief whole and consecrates all men's powers to their true purposes,” in other words it must be found with those who alone of all the children of earth have abided with that Living Presence from which all spirituality emanates and without which spirituality is neither experienced nor understood.

Now that this recognition has come to us through the medium of the British Whig it is to be expected that the beautiful verse of Father Ryan, the poet-priest, of Father Faber, the poet of nature and grace, of Mrs. Meynel, of Francis Thompson, of a dozen or so American poets and of our own Dr. Fischer, may be awarded a niche even in Catholic homes, much higher than has heretofore been given it.

AN IMPORTANT PUBLICATION.

On page 7 of our last issue we published a copy of a notice from the “London Universe” of a work just published by Rev. T. Hurley, D.D., of the diocese of Elphin, with a preface by the Most Rev. Dr. Clancy, Bishop of the same diocese. We have since received a copy of the volume, and even a cursory glance serves to fill one with the idea of the importance of the work. The comment of the “Catholic Universe” that “to the majority of Catholics in England, the Index is but a name—a vague shadowy something, that places a ban on cer-

tain books, which books, however, nobody seems able to definitely tell you,” might be extended, at least to Canada—speaking for ourselves—where the nature of the Index is probably just as vague, shadowy and obscure as in England or elsewhere.

This being so, this latest work of Father Hurley, his “Commentary on the Present Index Legislation,” will likely find many who will be glad to avail themselves of the occasion of its coming to possess themselves of a copy.

In his introductory chapters the author deals with the necessity for preventing the circulation of wicked literature and the circumstances and conditions which led to the formation of the Index. The ancient heretics and heresies are all dealt with, the works of Arius, Origen, Nestorius, Scotus Eriugina and others, being touched upon. Points in science are incidentally explained in so far as they concern the work in hand; hypnotism, Mesmerism, animal-magnetism and many other subjects of general interest are here defined. The work, though containing sufficient matter of common interest to make it popular, will be found of especial import to priests and ecclesiastics generally. The book may be obtained from W. E. Blake, 123 Church St. Toronto.

Leon XIII.

Rescue! Rescue!! These were the heartrending words and despairing cries of the crew (22 men) of the ill-fated French ship, Leon XIII., on the morning of Wednesday, October 2nd, 1907. The beautiful vessel had struck on a rock, in a fierce gale, on the most dangerous part of the wild west coast of Clare. The sailors, terror-stricken, fled to the rigging as the furious waves broke over the doomed ship. The shore was lined with crowds of spectators of the terrible scene.

The trained and capable Coast-guards launched their lifeboats. They were driven back again and again, and courage failed them, as one of their men was washed over-board by waves then rolling mountains high. Despair settled on almost every face. Hope seemed gone, but no! The brave Quilty fishermen, every man a Catholic, will prove that under God they can save that crew—French, American, British.

“To the Canoes,” is the cry. Every man makes ready. At that moment the hearts of mothers, wives, sisters, children, friends, seemed to cease their beating as those brave men left their homes determined to do or die in that grand Christian effort. The sea and storm were raging furiously. The sailors in the doomed Leon began to leave their sinking ship. It was an awful moment!!!

“Well,” said the captain, “it is all over now, but I may tell you as I clung to that raft for 48 long hours, and saw wave after wave sweeping down towards me, and heard the winds roaring and the waves rolling over me, I gave up all hope, but, somehow, were I to go to my doom at that very instant, I think my parting moments would be made happy by the sight of those intrepid Irishmen who were facing death in their mad efforts to rescue us. We owe them our lives.” The crew to the last man was saved. The ship went to fragments where she lay. Irishmen have to their credit many brave deeds on land and sea, but none more brave or more heroic than the rescue of the Leon's crew by the Quilty fishermen.

Stretching along the sea-coast for two miles is the fishing hamlet of Quilty. It is made up of miserable houses scattered here and there. In some places there are clusters of those wretched dwellings, as, for instance, Quilty, Seafeld, Tromeroe, Clohaninchy East and Clohaninchy West. The village of Quilty, which is usually meant to include the other places mentioned, is inhabited by about seventy families. For the most part they have no land of any kind, and live on what they can wrest from the sea, in the shape of fish and sea-weed. They live as a distinct Colony and do not associate with those who live inland. For years and years, their ambition, their hopes, their prayers have been for “a little Chapel in which to worship God.” The Bishop, the Dean, the Arch-deacon, and the Canons of the Diocese strongly approve of this project. The Bishop has contributed £50 towards its fulfilment.

The fishermen and their families scarcely ever go to Mass, but it is not their fault. Their all-sufficient excuses are: They are a very long distance from Church or Chapel, their clothes are of the poorest kind; they have the greatest reluctance to associate with, even at Mass, those better circumstanced in life, and, besides there is the almost constant pinch of poverty. Seventy families of such brave men, and not less brave women not going to Mass, is a sad—a deplorable sight in Catholic Ireland!!!

Their bravery has called special attention to the pressing need there is of a little Chapel for those heroic men.

We appeal to generous America for help for this deserving object. Two of the rescued crew were American citizens. One of them, Albert Sleuser, was from Cleveland, Ohio. In his rescue three of the fishermen were dashed into the sea, and most lost. Sleuser subsequently said, “We owe them our lives; I think God never created nobler men than the Quilty fishermen. They are brave fellows all.” We appeal to all creeds and classes on behalf of this good work, for those brave men. The Chapel will be a lasting memorial of the brave and successful rescue. It will be to the present and future generations an inspiration to noble deeds. It will be in the midst of those brave men—the scene of the rescue—to brighten their cheerless lives, and to bring them nearer and make them dearer to God. Help them, even a little, in their grand ambition in this good and Christian work, and may God bless you!! We appeal specially to Claretians, and Irishmen generally, who can with reason feel proud of those brave sons of the old land. We ask that your admiration and gratitude be practical.

The Treasurer of the Fund is the Very Rev. James Canon Cahill, P.P., Kilmurry-Ibricken, Co. Clare. Subscriptions will also be thankfully re-

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