

ST. ANN'S YOUNG MEN.

President P. T. O'Brien's Able Report of the Operations.

A Most Successful Term in Every Department of the Organization—Religious, Social and Financial Undertakings Crowned With Success.

Mr. P. T. O'Brien, the talented and energetic official head of the St. Ann's Young Men's Society, recently presented the following able and highly interesting report of the great work carried on by the organization over which he has presided with so much honor to the Society and credit to himself.

ST. ANN'S YOUNG MEN'S HALL, MONTREAL, Jan'y 12th, 1898.

To the R. V. Director, Officers and Members of St. Ann's Young Men's Society:

REVEREND SIR AND GENTLEMEN—In compliance with Article III, section IV, of our Constitution, governing the duties of the President, I deem it a pleasant task to lay before you, this evening, a short review of the proceedings and working transactions of your Society for the year ending Dec'r 31st 1897.

The year has passed with its lessons of success and failure, and we are again gathered together with undiminished strength of rank and ble to profit by our past mistakes, to rectify our errors and exercise our judgment for a wise conservative future.

The various schemes planned and undertaken by us were pushed forward with energy, vigor and despatch, and consequently with success. I therefore crave your indulgence for a few moments, and ask you to travel back with me through the halls of your memory while I recall them to you once more.

After the ritual attached to the installation of your officers had been performed, and subsequent to the regular anniversary Communion in January, the Choral Dramatic section were called upon to give an entertainment on February 9th, which request was cheerfully met and heartily responded to by the members of that branch, who, with their customary good will, immediately set to work to accomplish our desire. No-doubt, indeed, is it for me at this late date to say that it proved to be a grand success, as the criticism and comment which followed its production was highly favorable and warmly deserved by the participants.

Our next was a departure, or what might properly be termed the restoration of a right to our patrons and friends. I have reference to the complimentary concert which took place on March 2nd, under the direction and supervision of our talented and thoroughly competent choir-man, Mr. P. J. Shea, who spared no pains on that occasion to give us something above the ordinary, and whose efforts in that respect were crowned with success, as was clearly illustrated by the very large assemblage of our friends who were present ther to enjoy it.

The month of April was one of leisure and pleasure, and found the members wending up the various games of our local tournament and counting their possible chances on winning the bicycle which was set up for competition and which subsequently became the property of Mr. W. Cloney.

disposed by a numerous crowd of Montreal's most respectable citizens, who took advantage of our outing to enjoy themselves in a healthful recreation. The beginning of August found our executive making extensive preparations for a Pilgrimage to Beauharnois, which, as you are all aware, took place on the 23rd of that month, and notwithstanding the early hour of departure, the commodious and comfortable palace steamer Terrebonne left her moorings with over two hundred of our friends—chiefly ladies—and wended its way through the Lachine Canal, and gliding smoothly over the placid waters of Lake St. Louis, Lake Francis and Beauharnois Canal, returning by way of the enchanting Cedar Rapids and arriving home at ten o'clock with the most contented and pleased set of people who ever went out to spend a holiday.

On September 19th our Society accepted an invitation to participate in a pilgrimage to the lonely and neglected graves of the Irish emigrants. This kind thought not only emanated from the warm hearts of the Redeemptorist Fathers of St. Ann's, but was also projected and conducted by them with great pomp and success, which was fully appreciated by the thousands of people who had journeyed to that obscure spot to assist in the memorial service on that occasion.

On the following Sunday the annual pilgrimage to Cote des Neiges Cemetery took place and was largely attended.

The next was the annual Communion for the deceased members of our Society, which took place on the 25th November, and was not only conspicuous, but figuratively, a most successful demonstration, as the members, with their usual promptness and punctuality, answered, in a large number, the call of that sacred duty, and when I state it was a source of much pleasure and gratification for our beloved pastor and reverend director, as well as our parents and friends, to behold such a multitude of young men charitably remembering their deceased brethren, it would, indeed, be only half expressing the sentiments they possess on all such occasions when we make open profession of the Faith we so dearly love, cherish and foster. On the following Tuesday we gave two grand and unique entertainments, the first part of which was the portraying of a number of animated scenes by the Veri scope, under the direction of Viscount H. D'Hauterivis, amongst which was produced the Life of our Lord Jesus Christ, as represented every ten years at Oberammergau (Bavaria). The second part was well looked after by the members of the Dramatic section, who provided us with a comedy farce. The whole performance was a howling success and thoroughly appreciated by the large audience who were present.

Thus far I have endeavored to portray in my humble manner some of the principal events and achievements of the past year, but there is still another item which I regret in having to record, and that is the double visit we received from the dark and sombre Angel of Death, who, with his spectral army, seized and carried away from us, in their prime of life, two of our oldest and most esteemed members viz., John Morgan and Daniel Devoe. By the death of the former, the Choral and Dramatic section of our Society have been bereft of not only an artist, but lost an ardent worker and a loyal member of that branch and an affable and genial associate. No more within that sacred edifice, where he so frequently and incessantly sang the praises of his Creator, shall we hear his sweet and melodious voice, no more shall we behold his light and fascinating form tripping across the stage at our entertainments always ready and willing to undertake any duty imposed upon him; his cheerful contentment and his sunny ways, his ability and qualifications, not only made him a general favorite but left a gap within our ranks which will take time to fill. The other, a true and staunch admirer and devoted friend of our society although inactive for a number of years he never failed to uphold the loving interest he cultivated when our organization was in its infancy and which he retained with the same valor and ardency up to the hour of his death.

They have gone beyond recall, they have walked through the valley of the shadow of death. They sleep and no voice save One can wake them.

May their souls rest in peace. I cannot permit the occasion to pass without making a slight reference to the various branches of our society so that you may all know how they stand. The Choral and Dramatic sections being the kingpins, I shall commence with them. It is superfluous for me to mention that both these important factors of our organization kept up their usual standard of excellence in the way of providing us with high and classical entertainments. Of them we have every reason to feel justly proud, as no other society in the city can boast of superior theatrical and histrionic talent and ability, which has been proven in a practical manner by the large and continuous patronage our entertainments always receive. They have also done much to increase our revenue, and now on the eve of my abdication I cannot resist the impulse of gratitude in tendering my sincerest thanks to the members comprising these sections, who, like true and faithful workers, devoted their valuable time in preparing and assisting in the numerous performances and particularly to the energetic chairman, Mr. Ed. Quinn, and Patrick Suet, for the very able manner in which they accomplished the duties attached to those branches, and also for the way they have succeeded in bringing them to their present efficient condition, and so long as we receive the benefit of their assistance there is no reason to fear but what they will continue to be, what have been in the past, the prop and main support of our society. With regard to the Library, it affords me much pleasure and satisfaction to say that the affairs of that department are in a very flourishing condition. The interest manifested by the members has not diminished, and judging from

the 245 volumes that were taken out for perusal by the members, it would seem as though they were cognizant of the many benefits and advantages that are to be derived from following that section. During the year 98 new books have been added to the 2,377 volumes already contained in the catalogue. The Librarian, Mr. M. Farrell, and his assistant, Wm. Daly, deserve our highest praise and greatest gratitude for their success in placing this department in its present excellent condition.

The Reading Room continues to prove one of the chief attractions for our members, being supplied with the popular city English dailies and weeklies, as well as a batch of foreign periodicals.

The Amusement Room, with its commodities and various attractions, has proved to be a powerful magnet, if we may infer from the immense patronage it received during the year.

The billiard, pool, checker, chess and card tables, always in full blast, have been carefully attended to by the popular and diligent chairman, Mr. Thomas Dillon, whose adhesion and devotion to that department is worthy of more than the poor words of praise which I would utter. To him we are indeed deeply indebted for the able and efficient manner in which he not only fulfilled the duties of his position but for the keen judgment he has always exercised in matters pertaining to his department. I am delighted to know that the members have shown their appreciation of his zeal and energy by creating him an honorary member of the executive—a favor which he is justly entitled to.

The only change of note in our buildings is the meeting-room which, as you are all aware is at present being thoroughly renovated and remodelled after the latest and most modern styles,



MR. P. T. O'BRIEN.

and when completed will without doubt be one of the finest in the city. We also have reason to be pleased with the general cleanliness of our building and the very satisfactory manner in which our caretakers, Mr. and Mrs. Gannon, discharged their duties. As regards the financial standing of our organization I am glad to be able to report a surplus. Notwithstanding the fact that the Treasurer's report shows a decrease in revenue for 1897, it also shows a corresponding decrease in the expenditures. The decrease in revenue can be attributed to fewer entertainments than the previous season, and the decrease in expenses and large credit balance to the vigilance of our Treasurer.

The total grand receipts since the organization of our Society in November 1857 amount to \$27,571.84, which, I am proud to say, is quite a respectable figure, and speaks volumes for the virility and activity of our society.

Referring to the membership, I am glad to note a very large increase, as will be disclosed to you by the Secretary in his report. The thanks of our Society are due to the Reverend John Catulle, our beloved Parish Priest, and other Redeemptorist Fathers, for the keen interest they have always taken in everything concerning our welfare, for the loving and generous manner in which they have criticized our steps, as well as for their timely aid in rendering us pecuniary assistance when exigency compels it, and the other numerous favors they have bestowed on us. May God in His infinite goodness spare them for many a day to guide and watch over us in the future as they have done in the past.

To Miss Winnie Daly, Miss Carroll and Miss Maggie Devine are also due the thanks of this organization for the kind assistance rendered by them during the year. To the TRUE WITNESS, for the unlimited space it has on all occasions devoted to our departures and undertakings, as well as for the deep interest it has always taken in matters concerning the young men's societies of the city. In connection with this, I would strongly impress upon the members at large the necessity of giving it their full support, as it is practically the only watch guard we have in this Province, where strife is rife and where our people have so frequently suffered; to Mr. James Martin, for invaluable services rendered and his constant devotion to the Literary section of our organization; to Mr. James Kenahan, whose courtesy we have always enjoyed on St. Patrick's Day; to L. Davin and M. B. Quinn.

And now, gentlemen, in conclusion, and while bidding adieu to the position which I was so proud to attain and so cheerfully occupied, I wish to say a few words, and tender my heartfelt thanks firstly to our whole soiled friend, Advisor, and worthy Spiritual Director, the Reverend Father Strabbe through whose instrumentality we have attained our present distinction of ranking as the Premier Catholic Young Men's Society of Canada. To some present, especially those who have not as yet had the honor of being a councillor in our society and who are not familiar with the work that he has performed year in and year out, it may seem that our present standing has come around very easily and without much effort, but, gentlemen, I can tell you it has taken much valuable time, labor and anxiety to bring our organization to its present efficiency.

Our Reverend Director has taken a great deal of care and responsibility in all matters and has with tried patience and labor systemized our workings by his faithful and undivided attention. With his help and advice our various executives have always been able to

USE ONLY

Finlayson's Linen Thread.

IT IS THE BEST

bringing us harmoniously and successfully through the many years of trial that it took to place us where we are; our hearty thanks are due him for the energy he has always displayed in helping and directing in the accomplishments of the many undertakings we have risked, always seeking and striving for with untiring zeal for the true comfort and happiness of those whose welfare God has placed in his charge. Many of our members have reason to be grateful for his powerful influence used in their behalf, whereby their paths in life are made more secure and prospects of eventual success more clearly defined. My only prayer is, and I think it is one which you will all join me, that he may be spared to us for a long time to come, as we still require him and his wise counsel to guide us through the ruffled paths of life.

I desire, secondly, to express my warm thanks to the officers of the Council upon whose willing and intelligent assistance I depended so much for the accomplishment of the many enterprises and transactions encountered during my term of office. Thirdly, to the Secretaries, Financial Secretaries and Treasurer, my thanks for the efficient manner in which they discharged the duties of their respective functions, and while I convey to the Treasurer and my Secretary my felicitations at the honorary positions they have been placed in, by the members in electing one, the Hon. President, and the other, your President, I delight in recording the event as one worthy of space in the annals of the history of our Society, and avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate the members upon their tact and choice selections.

As for the Assistant Secretary and Financial Secretaries, I cannot laud too highly the great work and invaluable services they rendered the Society, and my only wish is to see them some day in the near future occupying positions of trust wherein their remuneration may equal their undoubted merit; and lastly, to the members of our Society for their active assistance when required their general good conduct and their gentlemanly deportment, which reflected in an admirable manner upon them selves and on the President, your humble servant, who occupied the chair during the year 1897.

I have the honor to be, R. V. Sir and gentlemen, Yours sincerely P. T. O'BRIEN.

A STRANGE CONVERSION.

The Result of a Visit of a Priest to an Employee of a Rich Man.

There is no man in the community who has stranger experiences than the Catholic priest, says a writer in the Catholic Universe. The very nature of his sacred office makes him the confidant of many persons whose secrets are shared only by him. He sees human nature, as few others do, in all its phases. He gets below the surface and deep down in the hearts and minds and consciences of men as no one else does. There isn't a priest of middle age who has not stored away in the inner chambers of memory material for tragedies, comedies and romances galore, gleaned from actual studies of life revealed to him in the outpouring of uninvited confidences, sometimes from the most unexpected sources. And nowhere are these varied and tangled threads of light and shade of human life more secure from the vulgar gaze. The pathos of

SORROW AND FAILURE AND DISAPPOINTMENT, as well as the joy of success and realized hopes, is apprehended by him in a way that no one else can so fully experience, because his knowledge is the fruit of disinterested observation and opportunities from which others are barred. This accounts in a measure for the spirit of gentle tolerance and broad sympathies which characterize the Catholic priesthood. Its members know human nature, its under-currents and cross lights and are more capable of bearing with its apparent weaknesses and contradictions than the ordinary student of the subject, whose means enable him to acquire only a superficial acquaintance with its intricacies. From extraneous sources I have learned of some

CURIOUS INCIDENTS IN THE CAREER OF PRIESTS

in the town that would furnish valuable data for a clever writer of fiction. Most of these reminiscences will not, of course, bear public repetition, as they touch upon the private lives and concerns of people still in the flesh. In the case of others, which have a humorous aspect, the point of the tale would be lost in the necessary suppression of names and circumstances, which might lead to the identification of the individuals involved. I heard some time ago of an incident which led to the conversion of a gentleman who was for years very prominent in the Cleveland business and social world on his deathbed. A certain pastor was called late one night to visit the coachman of a family on Euclid avenue, who had been taken suddenly ill and seemed to be in immediate danger of death.

THE NIGHT WAS COLD AND STORMY,

but the latter lost no time in bundling himself up warmly and answering the summons. He was admitted to the great man's house by a servant, who guided him to the room of his stricken fellow servant. After administering to the invalid as his condition required the priest started to leave. In passing through the lower hall towards the front

door he was accosted by the master of the house, who, seated beneath the shaded light of the library, inquired about the welfare of his coachman. The priest described the latter's condition and expressed the belief that he would recover from the attack. The gentleman replied incidentally that he considered himself more seriously ill than the coachman and in greater need of both medical and spiritual help.

"If I sent for you," he said to the clergyman, "I suppose you would not come to me on such a mission." "On the contrary, I would come with the same alacrity as I have shown in responding to the call of your servant. Any Catholic priest would. That is our duty."

"But I am not of your faith; I am practically an infidel. If you sent for me it would be a sufficient evidence that you desired my assistance. That would be enough to insure my presence."

The gentleman urged the priest to be seated, and the two had a long conversation on the subject of religion and kindred topics. At the close of their talk the host announced his willingness to become a Catholic on the spot if the priest would accept his confession of faith, though he frankly admitted that he knew nothing whatever of the teachings and practices of the Catholic Church. He was very much surprised when the priest informed him that the Church would not accept him on such terms. The mere willingness on his part was not enough. It was necessary for him to know what he was doing, not only to understand what the doctrine of the faith were, but to subscribe to them because he was

ABSOLUTELY CONVINCED THAT THEY WERE THE TRUTH

and that the church alone was empowered to define them and command his submission to her authority as the institution founded by Christ, and to be upheld by Him for all time according to His promise. The priest explained that true faith was a gift of God not merely an act of the human intellect. The gentleman was amazed when the matter was presented to him in this light. He had intended by his complacency to demonstrate how liberal he was by proving that in his judgment one religion is as good as another, and that he would just as lief be a Catholic as a Protestant or an infidel. Naturally his vanity was wounded when he found that the priest did not go into ecstasies at the prospect of securing the accession of so much social eminence. His expectations with fashionable Protestant pretensions had been so utterly different. The priest promised to send him a catechism for his enlightenment, and bade him on leaving to send for him in case he wanted any difficulties explained, or felt that God had given him the grace to become a real Catholic.

IT WAS A LONG TIME AFTER

that when the priest received a request through a servant to call upon the gentleman. He found the latter in bed very much wasted in form from the ravages of his malady and clearly within the clutches of death. In a feeble voice the invalid explained that he had studied the catechism thoroughly and revolved the matter in his mind to such an extent that he was firmly convinced of the divinity of the Catholic Church and desired to embrace the faith in a spirit of humility and gratitude for the grace of true conversion. The priest accepted of his confession of faith, baptized him and administered the last sacraments. Length shortly afterwards intervened. The gentleman's family caused to permit the funeral to be conducted according to Catholic form, and the gentleman was buried with Protestant services, at which the minister of the church of which his relatives were nominal members officiated. The news of the gentleman's conversion



A Fatal Spider-Web.

When a fly accidentally gets caught in a spider's web, the spider goes calmly about the work of securing his prey. He doesn't hurry particularly. He takes his time and binds his time and binds his time and binds his time. That is the way with the dread enemy of mankind—consumption. It has a web of web of trivial disorders neglected. When a man heedlessly stumbles into that web, consumption first attacks his stomach, then his blood, then his lungs, then every organ in his body. Many doctors assert that when a man is once in this deadly web there is no escape. That is a mistake. Thousands have testified to their recovery from this disease by the use of the right remedy. Many of their letters, together with their names, addresses and photographs, appear in Dr. Pierce's Common Sense Medical Adviser. The remedy that saved them was Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. It cures 95 per cent. of all cases of consumption. It cures the conditions that lead up to it. It is the great blood-maker, flesh-builder and germ-jector. Druggists sell it.

Your favorite "Prescription" cured my little girl, seven years old, of St. Vitus's dance, writes Mrs. A. E. Loomis, of Walnut Grove, Redwood Co., Minn. "She could not feed herself, nor talk. That was fifteen years ago. I have always had great faith in your medicines ever since. I had a terrible cough, and my friends thought I had consumption. I took the 'Golden Medical Discovery' and it cured my cough and now I do my housework. I have always praised your medicine and would like to have your 'Common Sense Medical Adviser.' I enclose stamps."

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version was never published and few outside of his immediate household are even yet aware of what transpired on his death-bed.

BLUE BLOOD.

In a country where blood of "the true blue" character is comparatively scarce and correspondingly prized by those who have it in their veins, it is well to know something of the origin of the term, and the following explanation throws an interesting light upon it.

The origin of the term "blue blood" is most suggestive. After the black Moors were driven out of Spain the aristocracy of Spain was held to consist of those who traced their lineage back to the time before the Moorish conquest. These people were whiter than those who had been mixed with the Moorish blood. The veins upon their white hands were blue, while the blood of the masses, contaminated by the Moorish infusion, showed black upon their hands and faces. So the white Spaniards of the old race came to declare that their blood was "blue," while that of the common people was black. The phrase passed into France, where it had no such significance, and was, in fact, quite arbitrary, and thence it came to England and America.

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