

THE LATE FATHER KENNETH M'DONALD

Another zealous priest has heard the call to the great Judgment Seat, full of years and good works, full of treasures garnered up in the garden of prayers, full of prizes won by toils and labors in uncultivated fields. This time it is a retired priest, one on whom the years had weighed so heavily that he could not attend to parish work fourteen years ago. Although then nearly eighty years of age, and suffering from an injury to his leg caused by slipping on ice, covered with light dry snow, he reluctantly gave up his charge, for he was still vigorous and attached to the work of the sacred ministry. Father Kenneth, as we lovingly called our pastor, was born in South River, Antigonish Co., N. S., in May, 1821. He was up in years of boyhood before he could attend school, but the call to the altar was so loud in his ear, that he must not stop for any difficulty that may be in his way. God gives various talents to those whom He calls to the priesthood. A certain degree of intelligence is necessary for those who would be the light of the world, but good morals were surely the flavor that Christ impressed upon the Apostles to be so essential, and without which there was nothing else to serve against corruption. The failures which we may have observed are not owing to lack of talent. Far from this being the case, we find that industry and application to one's duties have done wonderful things in the same field in which extraordinary talent without industry and a sense of duty has clearly failed. Even some of our greatest scholars, artists, statesmen and orators were not known to have more than the average, and sometimes below the average talent. But these by application to their work and a determination to succeed, and an unbounding confidence in the reward which labor necessarily brings, left footprints behind them that we cannot but admire. Perhaps there is a superficial brilliancy in which our later educationists place too much confidence. Perhaps, to our shame we have to admit it, that we sometimes place qualities of intellect above those of heart and soul. Perhaps, we have to admit of a still more regrettable blunder, that of a trivial fault in an individual to be sufficient to arouse our prejudices so as to cause us to be blind to very useful traits which he may possess.

In these days it was difficult to receive an education; the schools were few and far between, the parents lately arrived as exiles, thrown penniless on a foreign shore. Discriminated also against on account of their religious belief, they despaired of being able to educate their children. The late priest recalled what time he could spare from earning his living to studies. He attended the best schools in the county and taught school himself; then went to Arichat. His course was short in the grammar school at St. Andrew's as well as at Arichat, and then at Laval where he made his theology. He was ordained in 1866, Dec. 8th. He labored for a few months at Arichat, six years at Arisaig and Bailey's Brook, three years at Pt. Hood and Mabou, and twenty seven years at Mabou and Lake Ainslie. In Oct., 1894, he retired as we have said above, and spent those years in prayer and meditation, preparing for the call to give an account of a most faithful stewardship.

About six years ago, the writer of this short and imperfect sketch heard the beloved priest tell stories of the hardships undergone by missionary priests in the diocese of Antigonish in the late 50's and 60's and 70's, which he jotted down in a diary. An item from it showing that good Father Kenneth had his share of hardship may interest readers and cause them to utter a prayer for the holy soul. "In May, after my ordination," the venerable priest says, "the Bishop with whom I was staying received a petition from the people of Ingouish and Bay St. Lawrence asking him to send them a priest and that they would try to do everything possible in order to get accommodations for him. Father Laughlin was the nearest priest, 60 miles away, and he was getting feeble, so it was decided to send me down at least to enable the people to perform their Easter duties, and to prepare the children and they were not children either, for some who were over twenty years of age had not made their First Communion for the Sacraments. A vessel was engaged in a few days, but before I was ready she found favorable winds and set sail. There was nothing left but to sink it, a distance of over a hundred miles."

When the end of the journey was reached he was so foot-sore and tired, that he could not wear a shoe for some time. He had to stay at a private house, where he said Mass and had to go to different parts of the country to enable them to receive instructions. Here he saw the needs of a strong temperance sentiment, for St. Piere's product was cheap, strong and plenty at that time. At St. Joseph's and Arisaig, he continued his fight against alcoholic liquors, and at Port Hood and Mabou he fought that evil with all the intrepidity of a Spartan. He was truly called, at the meeting of the Grand Council of the L. O. C., held at Port Hood a short time ago, "The Apostle of Temperance of Inverness."

Father Kenneth was not only a zealous priest, but he was a public spirited citizen. He taught, by word and deed, thrift and industry. If Mabou to-day can look with pride to its record in sending priests to be educated to the priesthood, if the parents were able and willing to give their children a higher education, it is owing as largely indeed to Father Kenneth's teaching than his thrift, as to his instructing them so well.

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in their religious doctrines. He built out of his own earnings—the greater part made out of cultivating a farm—a convent, and he bought the site for the convent, the Glebe house, which he also built. Besides all this, he had collected in the parish \$8,000 to build a new church when he resigned from the charge of Mabou. We see, therefore, that he was a financier in the highest sense of the term. He taught by word and example that industry and thrift are two of the most necessary virtues for Catholics as citizens; he preached and taught by example that self-denial is not only good for the soul, but that it tends to enable man to attain to the highest degree of happiness obtainable in this life.

Father Kenneth was manly, virile, forceful, sturdy. He was intrepid as the soldier who knows that his cause is so good that he must win, and that his method—although not the easiest to pursue—is the most effective. There was no effeminacy in his manner; there was no puerility in any of his attempts. He had as little sympathy for the uncouth rowdy in the village grog shop as he had for the village beau who was intoxicated with his own importance. Truly his anger seemed that which was recommended by the sacred writer: Be angry and sin not. His readiness to reprove caused his displeasure to be feared as much as his pious and prayerful life caused the priest to be respected.

Father Kenneth's knowledge of the spiritual life was acquired at the foot of the Cross rather than from books or any other source. St. Thomas of Aquin is known to have spent hours in meditation before a crucifix before starting one of his learned theses. Even the Angel of the schools thought it necessary to spend more time learning in silence at the Cross than with Aristotle and Plato the great philosophers or even with Augustine the great ascetic and theologian.

Well the older people of Mabou remember this sturdy priest braving a storm about Easter time to reach a house in the far off end of the parish to enable the older people to approach the sacraments. Little wonder that at times he reproved those who seemed to him to love their ease too much. It was on these occasions that it was easy to preach on the text on the kingdom of Heaven suffering violence and the violent only winning the great prize.

Every social virtue is weakened by contact with the opposite vice. Sometimes friends who have many virtues may have failings or even vices that may be injurious to the one who enjoys such a friendship. Cardinal Manning says that only one friend is perfect and changeless, "others often grieve and disappoint us. But our perception of his friendship will vary in the measure in which we maintain our liberty from all unbalanced human attachments. We owe our whole heart to Him from the hour of our ordination and if we abide in this equilibrium we shall find His friendship alone sufficient." Further on the great Cardinal says: "If we be weak and wander to human friendships, we shall soon find that there is no rest anywhere else. Everything else is too narrow for a soul to rest on; too changeable to be trusted; too full of self to give room for us." And then again, "Do not let any one think that a priest who has one Divine friend will be cold or heartless or careless of flock and friends, of the lonely and forsaken. The more united to his Master the more like Him he becomes. None are so unselfish, so compassionate as the priest whose heart is sustained in its poise and balance of supreme friendship with Jesus and in absolute independence of human attachments."

A few years ago a classmate of the late priest writing from another part of the country giving reminiscences of college days said of him that he was the less sociable of the number, and seemed, in what appeared to be had taste, to imply that it was a defect in him. Cardinal Manning in the above sentences shows that this seeking excessively after human friendship is rather weakness. If friends can be kept while one is doing one's duty, well and good, if not let no one neglect what is essential for the purpose of attending what is only secondary.

An Archbishop who knew him as a boy, who heard his earnest exhortations, who observed his labors in the Archbishop's own native parish, said of him: "Father Kenneth's life proves quite conclusively what God's grace can do by means of or through the instrumentalality of a person of limited acquirement. St. Paul also said of himself: Of myself I am nothing, but by God's grace I am what I am. The Apostle says again: I can do everything by Him who worketh in me Christ Jesus."

In his will, his last testament, it was expressed that he be laid beside another holy and zealous priest, and that no sermon be preached at the funeral. Father Quinn predeceased him some seven years, but now their ashes are destined one day to mingle while a later generation will read of lives that will be an inspiration. Even we wonder how they affected so much good, how they attended all the sick in those

vast regions, how they taught so well the people that they are even to-day regarded to be well instructed. After all these years of unceasing labor and toil, they laid down the burden of their charges to live afterwards many years of honored retired life to a ripe and fruitful old age.

DIocese OF PETERBORO

SISTER ALOYSIUS All the beautiful solemnity and touching simplicity that characterizes the church's farewell to her departed children, marked the funeral service for Sister M. Aloysius Fitzpatrick at Mount St. Joseph. The service began at 8.30 with the celebration of solemn Requiem High Mass, and at that time the Chapel of the Sacred Heart was filled by the immediate relatives and friends of the deceased, the community of Mount St. Joseph, and most of the Sisters from the various other convents in the city. An added pathos was given to the morning's sad proceedings by the fact that the celebrant of the High Mass was a brother of the deceased, Rev. Father Fitzpatrick, of Ennismore. Rev. Father Bretherton, Hastings, acted as deacon, and Rev. Father Galvin, Galway, sub-deacon, with Rev. Dr. O'Brien, Sacred Heart church, master of ceremonies. Presiding at the throne was His Lordship Bishop O'Connor and in the sanctuary, gathered to show a last mark of respect to one whom everybody revered as one of the best beloved sisters of St. Joseph, were Rev. Father McColl, rector of St. Peter's cathedral; Rev. Father Conway, Peterborough; Rev. P. J. McQuire, Downeyville; Rev. P. J. Kelly, Norwood; Rev. Jas. Conner, St. Peter's, and Rev. D. A. Casey, St. Peter's.

FATHER M'ENAMIN'S DEPARTURE

It may be said with truth that heart-felt regret is felt on all hands because of the transfer of Rev. D. P. McEnamin, P. P., Biddulph, from the diocese of London to that of Sault Ste Marie. He leaves London with the blessing of his Bishop, the highest regard of his fellow priests and the heartfelt affection of the people of the whole diocese. For well nigh to a generation he has labored in our midst and during that long space of time he has been in every regard a model priest. His every thought and act was for the glory of God, the interest of God's Church and the spiritual welfare of the people committed to his charge. The prayers of all will follow him to his new field of labor. Bishop Scollard receives into his diocese one whose life work will be an inspiration. On last Sunday he preached his farewell sermon at St. Patrick's Church, Biddulph. After Mass he was presented with a testimonial of regard on behalf of the congregation in the shape of a well-filled purse by J. R. Quigley of the Grand Seminary, Montreal. The following address was read by Mr. W. S. Benn, of St. Thomas College, Houston, Texas: "Rev. and dear Father:—The time has come when we must sever our connection as priest and people and we thus have assembled here to-day on the occasion of your last day amongst us, to bid you a last fond farewell and to show our appreciation of faithful service as the guardian of our souls."

The aged are sometimes said to court death, or, at least, not greatly to fear its coming. The young, however, usually in love with life, do not like to think of death, and if its thought is forced upon them they look upon it as the universal fate, but not as an ordeal that immediately concerns them individually. There are exceptions, of course. One of the most striking instances, not merely of indifference to death, but of real joyousness at its coming, is found in the pages of Mr. Snead-Cox's fascinating biography of Cardinal Vaughan. The Cardinal's sister—a nun—at the age of nineteen wrote to an uncle to give him "glorious news."

GLORIOUS NEWS

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A Scientist of Miracles

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