

CORRESPONDENCE.

"THE MAIL" AND THE IRISH CATHOLICS.

To the Editor of The Northwest Review.

Sir—You and the editor of the "Irish Canadian" seems to be surprised that the Irish Catholic editor of "The Mail" should seek to cast a slur upon his Catholic countrymen by insinuating rather broadly, they are not up to the standard in education and ability, etc. Permit me to remark that you had scarcely any grounds for thinking that the Irish Catholic editor of the "Mail" should have more respect for his Irish Catholic countrymen than those had who have gone before him. Take a retrospective glance at Irish history for the past seven hundred years, since the days of Strongbow and Dermot McMorrough, and do you not find the prototype of the Irish Catholic Editor of the "Mail" portrayed on every page? Year after year men came to the front in whom the people placed implicit confidence; men of great promise and evident integrity; animated with a burning spirit to ameliorate the condition of their followers, and to remove the shackles that bound their unhappy country. But how few of them (were there any) persevered in the patriotic career limned out by themselves and their trusting people. Certainly within the last century there has been none with one honorable and immortal exception one whose memory will be green in the hearts of Irish people as long as green grass grows in Ireland, the late Daniel O'Connell, and even he had to contend with innumerable traitors and malignant enemies amongst his own people. The blazing meteors that from time to time made their appearance in the Irish arena, and in a loud voice proclaimed their determination "to free Ireland" or die in the attempt, proved themselves to be unmitigated frauds on the community and heartless traitors to their country, so soon as they got comfortably seated with their masters on the banks of the Thames. Among these I do not include the present agitator, Mr Parnell and his associates; he who will write about them fifty years hence will pronounce upon their career, and do them justice; so far, at all events, their success has been but problematical. There seems to be a well defined fatality, and shall I say fatuity; governing the destinies of that class of the Irish people of whom I speak; they have not sufficient stamina and backbone to resist successfully the influence that their surroundings exercise over them when they leave their native land. Like people who visit malarial districts and take germs of ague into their system, so it is with the leaders of Irish "freedom," when they get to London, they are overcome by the flattering so lavishly poured upon them, and the spirits of self-abasement and self-aggrandizement enter their soul—the first on account of their Irish origin, the second to make the most of their opportunities to gain their private ends, and from that moment instead of being the champions of their down-trodden country, they become abject slaves of her worst enemies. This type of the Irishman puts forth every effort to get on what he considers an equality with his new found foreign friend, and to obliterate every trace of his plebeian descent. He disguises his name by eliminating the obnoxious letters that betray the shallowness of the puddle from which his batrachian ancestors emerged, so that the cultured foreigner across the channel would never suspect his charming acquaintance—Mr Patrocles de Tehancy was known to the companions of his youth as Patrick O'Shaughnessy. The Catholic Church, too, in which he was brought up, gets a large share of this contempt he has for Irish manners and customs, he feels ashamed of his religion because it is old and unfashionable; neglects to hear Mass on Sundays; and his stomach becomes capacious and delicate and must be lined with good roast beef on Fridays and days of abstinence; in short he becomes a "liberal Catholic" which makes him anything but a Catholic. The Irish Catholic editor of the "Mail" therefore, has innumerable examples to guide him in his mode of making slanderous attacks upon his countrymen, but taking a charitable view of his case perhaps we ought to attribute it to his extreme humility although his own education and ability is a living refutation of the base attack. He may be pleased to look upon himself—because of his Irish Catholicism—as inferior in all respects to the average Englishman and the same retiring humility may govern his views upon church attendance and the use of abstinence food as well as upon the educational training of his co-religionists.

A. McGILLIS.

THE CHINESE SHOEBLACK PLANT.

The "Chinese shoeblack plant"—*Hibiscus rosinensis*—is a native of India, China, and other parts of Asia. In its native countries it forms a tree twenty or thirty feet in height. It is not hardy in England, and is cultivated simply as a greenhouse plant, for the sake of its beautiful flowers. These flowers contain a quantity of astringent juice, and, when bruised, rapidly turn black or deep purple. They are said to be used in Java for blacking shoes, whence the name.

EPITOME OF LATEST NEWS

The French Academie des Sciences has assigned the "grand prix" of 15,000 francs to the missionary, Father Zotoli O. S. F. for the best work on Chinese Literature.

Rev. Father Kenny will leave Montreal on Monday next and on his arrival here will immediately proceed to the Jesuits College at St. Boniface, where he is expected by Thursday next.

Archbishop Tache, it is thought will be absent about a month. His Grace is now in Ottawa, for the purpose of attending the funeral of Rev. Father Tabaret, Superior of the Oblates.

Cardinal Angelo Jacobini is dead. He was born at Giansano April 25th, 1825, and was created a Cardinal on March 27th, 1882. At the time of his death, he held the high position of Secretary of state to His Holiness Pope Leo XIII.

The members composing the party of the Extreme Left in the Chamber of Deputies met to-day to adopt a line of action on the proposed measure for the expulsion of the French princes. M. Clemenceau was present. By a vote of 40 to 6 the meeting favored the immediate expulsion of the princes. Clemenceau approved the motion.

One of the strongest indications of the rapid and complete healing of the difference between Prince Bismark and the Vatican is noticeable in the fact that the Hotel Costanzi in Rome has been purchased at a cost of 1,200,000f. by German buyers for the purpose of establishing therein a German college in Rome.

Pope Leo XIII celebrated the 75th anniversary of his birth on the 3rd March instant and the eighth anniversary of his coronation, by an address to the members of the Sacred College. In it His Holiness eulogizes the union existing among the Cardinals and urged concord among Catholics against those seeking to corrupt and weaken the authority of the Church. He deplored the oppressed conditions of the Holy See as unworthy of the head of the Church and incompatible with his independence.

The Provincial Legislature of Manitoba was formally opened on Thursday, the 4th instant by His Honor Lieutenant Governor Aikins, in the presence of the elite of Winnipeg and surrounding places. The address to the Throne is to be moved by James E. P. Prendergast—the new but able member for La Verandrye, seconded by Mr E. Leacock. Unusual interest attaches to the present session, as important measures will be brought down by the present Administration, including a Redistribution Bill, a new election Act. General elections will shortly follow the closing of the present Legislature. Each party will have its representative in the field for each constituency.

THE NOVA SCOTIA TRAPPISTS

From The Halifax Herald
At Tracadie, about two miles back from the village is situated, perhaps the most interesting institution in Nova Scotia, a

"TRAPPIST MONASTERY," which has here flourished in vigorous life for nearly twenty years. We refer to the Cistercian Abbey of Petit Clairvaux, which by the example and influence of its inmates must produce a most beneficial effect upon the surrounding people. The Abbey is an irregular pile, built principally of brick, consisting of a centre building containing the cloisters, cells, refectory, library, and reception rooms; attached to which on one side is the chapel, and on the other the workrooms, hospital office. Away from these at a distant across a courtyard are the mills and stables. The establishment surrounded by about 400 acres, consisting of grounds, orchard and farms, with a considerable wortion of forest, the whole well situated in a beautiful valley through which runs a rapid stream furnishing a never failing supply of pure water. The order to which this body of Monks belong is celebrated among the religious orders of the Roman Catholic Church for its extraordinary austerities, is so called from "La Trappe" an Abbey of the Cistercian order, founded in the 12th century. The celebrated churchman Armand Jean Le Bouthelie de Rance was abbot in 1663. The Trappists are not a preaching order, but practice the old monastic habit of manual labor. Perpetual silence is their rule, unless in cases of dire necessity. They are forbidden the use of meat, fish, eggs, butter, and wine; their only meal consisting of vegetables, unless their refreshment of an ounce of bread with water can be called a meal, which they partake of before retiring at 7 o'clock. By the Trappist rule the Monks rise at one o'clock a.m. for matins in the church. After an interval for private devotions, they go at half past five to the office of prime, which is followed by a lecture; after which they engage in their several daily labors indoors or out, according to the weather. Then follow at intervals the successive offices of terce, text and none; after which they dine. The meal is succeeded by manual labor

for two hours, after which each monk is occupied in prayer in his own cell until four o'clock, when they again assemble in the choir for vespers. After another interval a lecture follows. At six o'clock they recite our pline in choir, and after meditation and the partaking of the bread and water they retire to rest at 7 p.m. Their bed is a hard straw mattress and the Trappist never lays aside his habit, even in cases of sickness, unless it shall prove extreme. The minor observances and practices are devised so as to remind the Monk at every turn of the shortness of life and the rigor of judgment. When dead the Monks are not coffined, but are laid in the grave in the habit of the order they have worn in life.

THE TRAPPISTS WERE DRIVEN FROM FRANCE during the troubles of the revolution; but they returned subsequently and resumed by purchase possession of their old home at La Trappe, which continues up to the present time to be the head monastery of the order and number over 200 members. There are but few monasteries of the order in existence. There is a very large one at Mount Mellary, near Cappoquin, Ireland, and a very extensive one, with great territory attached, in Kentucky. But the monastery at Tracadie is the only one of the order in Canada. (A) We have briefly noticed the leading rules of the order, as many have heard of the monastery in this country, but who little imagined the austerity and self-abnegation of the devoted men who thus pass their days in prayer, labour and mortification. The monastery at Tracadie has undergone considerable alteration during the past twenty years. The old buildings have gradually been replaced by substantial brick structures. The grounds have been arranged; a massive dam has been built across the stream which runs through the valley by the monastery; a good head of water has thus been secured to aid the monks in their labour. A large mill, or rather series of mills, are in operation under one roof, driven by three Turbine wheels. The grist mills we saw in operation was well equipped, and the flour ground better than we have seen in Nova Scotia. The other mills, carding and shingie, will soon be in operation.

A MAGNIFICENT STABLE 185 FEET LONG OF BRICK with hard wood flooring for the cattle, adjoins the grist mills. The cattle, horses, swine and poultry to be seen are worthy a journey of 100 miles to look at. Here is kept nothing but the finest stock. The horses are particularly good. A Jersey bull with long pedigree, is an attraction. The cleanliness, warmth and attention paid the animals, joined to the superior feeding is shown in the remarkable fine quality of the butter made here, which generally brings in the market at least two cents per lb. more than the best offered by other parties. A large portion of the land surrounding the monastery is under cultivation, and the example of superior treatment of the soil over the usual methods will be of service to many farmers in the locality. Thirty laborers from the outside village are often employed during planting and harvest times. The buildings are to be augmented by the addition of another stable of equal capacity to the present. A wall is to be built around the entire establishment, and a larger chapel will soon be constructed. Monks make their own brick, and have a hill of lime stone, quarry, and kiln on the grounds. The labor already performed here has been enormous and the great portion of it dates from the coming from Belgium of the present right reverend Abbott and those who have since followed him here. Almost all trades and professions are represented among the brethren. The Abbott Father Dominique, is a man of fine presence and gracious manners, looking every inch the devout churchman and the astute man with all the weight of such an establishment on his shoulders.

HOSPITALITY TO STRANGERS is enjoined, and the abbey has made thousands welcome to its shelter during its existence. The brief visit we made recently to "Petit Clairvaux" will be long a pleasant memory of a monastic institution which, perhaps, is destined in time to equal some of those great foundations for ages so powerful in England and Scotland as were then English abbeys of the same order, Kirkstall, Furness, Tintern and Fountains, or the Scottish Melrose, Culreess Deer and Glenluce.

NOTE.—(A) This is not correct. There was for many years a Trappist Monastery near Quebec, which was closed some 15 years ago. Another was started for a short time in the Eastern Townships, which was also abandoned. Finally a permanent foundation was made 4 or 5 years ago at the Lake of Two Mountains near Montreal.—ED. N.W. REVIEW.]

CHANGE OF TIME.

Through Trains with Sleeping Cars attached will be run daily between Winnipeg and St. Paul as follows: Leaving Winnipeg at 9.45 a.m. (via St. Vincent, Crookston, Barnesville, Breckenridge and Morris) arriving in St. Paul at 7.30 a.m.
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