

## THE STORY OF A PICTURE.

WRITTEN FOR THE TRUE WITNESS BY  
DOMINIC CHRISTIE.

Once upon a time, in a great city where art was much thought of, a dusty, tangle-haired old man, pallid with much study, sat poring over tomes in a garret. Strewed on the floor were books of every size and style, and the walls all round, as high as the sloping ceiling, were lined with books; among the books were many pieces of brass and other metals, wrought into instruments of strange design.

The man was an inventor. In his youth he had been an artist and he had painted great pictures that had seemed to him to vie almost with the pictures of nature, drawn by the hand of God himself; so like were they to the reality. But the world had crowded into the Salon where they were exhibited and had scoffed at them, saying: "Who ever saw a scene of nature like to that?" "What fool has wasted time and pigment fashioning puerilities like this?" And the critics who had felt not the travail of painting these pictures said learnedly: "There is no art in them."

When the young painter, who was full of ambition and a desire to do right in art, had heard all these things, despair would have taken possession of his soul, but a stream of light like the bright rays of the sun let into a long time darkened room, suddenly lit up his mind, and he withdrew himself to a garret and painted no more, but occupied his genius with reading in many books and experiments with curious instruments of iron and brass.

After many years he sprang up suddenly one day, with a wondrous light in his eyes, for he had discovered that for which he had sought so long. He went out into the streets and walked joyously and lightly forward as if he trod on air, and he looked boldly to the right and left into the faces of the passers-by and smiled.

"At last!" he said. "At last, I shall test them, at last I shall see if they know the creations of the Omnipotent from that which is fashioned by the sons of men."

In the habitations of art it was carelessly said that one who had been away from art since his youth, and had now grown bent and grey with age, would show a picture of unique and startling composition.

The old man himself had passed this whisper round.

The picture was hung in the Salon and when the votaries of fashion and the dilettantes came they said, lightly. "Let us see this picture painted by Methusalem."

The picture was of a rural scene; of trees on a gently sloping hillside; the leaves on the trees were tinted with the ruddy hues of autumn, and above: The sky was blue without a cloud. This was on the first day and as the dilettantes passed they said, "Oh, there is nothing new in this picture, it is not unique as was said; and the fashionables having heard this and learnt what judgment to give, cried, Bah, it is common, it has nothing of nature in it; let us pass on and see the picture of the battle scene painted by the new painter.

The ancient artist on the outskirts of the crowd listened to their judgment of his work. "Their verdict is nothing," he said, soon a great artist will see it and he will know the reality that is in it; but when one great artist after another passed it and looked carelessly and indifferently upon it the eyes of the old man grew dim and his face pale, but he still waited, hoping that at least one would stop and show appreciation of it. But they all passed on, except one callow, awkward youth, who glanced at it, then came back and looked again, then walked into the distance, then returning seated himself finally to view it from the seat beside the old man. The two fell into conversation and the youth disclosed that he longed to become a great artist. Then pointing to the picture he said, "Who was the painter of that picture?"

And the old man said, "God." The youth told him: "All the pictures I paint I try to make like that, but the world laughs and will not have them of me."

The old man and the youth sat side by side for all the day, but none of those

who passed showed interest in the picture. Towards the early evening the youth, still looking at it, started, and said suddenly:

"See! there is a white cloud in the sky."

The old man smiled. "But look!" said the youth, clutching hard at the man's arm, "The cloud moves; it floats across the sky."

"Who painted that picture?" he asked again, his eyes staring wide.

The old man did not speak. Then the youth rose up with perspiration on his face and went close to the picture.

"Quick! Look! Look!" he said. See, there is a rabbit scampering through grass; it is alive. See now; it disappears beneath the ground. Look! I swear the leaves of the trees are waving in the breeze, and the clouds move and animals have life. What picture is this? None but the hand of God could make a scene like this—or—or—"and he hesitated and drew back in terror from the artist.

"It was the hand of God," said the old man.

Every day the artist and the youth came and watched the picture, and the leaves on its trees fell off one by one; sometimes its sky was blue, sometimes grey and sullen, and sometimes white fleecy clouds floated across its azure surface, but none but the artist and the youth admired the picture.

One day a famous artist passed with a book in his hand and the sky in the picture was black and lowering and the leaves were drooping as with rain. The great man read in his book "Blue sky, leaves tinted in early autumn hues." He carefully compared the numbers to see that he was right, then he went away.

Next day he came round with a companion, he had the same book in his hand. When he came to the picture he glanced at it again, then hurriedly at his book. The sky of the picture was blue again. He talked volubly to his friend and they walked quickly away. The old man who had been sitting with the youth as usual rose, and they both went out of the building. "Come to my address to-night," he said to the youth, "and I will give you the secret of the picture, for I am old and shall not need it, but you are young and love art as I once loved it."

The old man went slowly home.

At night the youth climbed the high stairs to the artist's garret and knocked. There was no answer. He opened the door: a light was in the room and the artist sat in his chair amid the dusty books and instruments that strewed the floor and lined the walls. There was a smile on his face. The youth spoke to him but got no answer; he went closer and touched him; there was no response; then his face grew very white and tears of anguish flooded his eyes, for there had grown up in him a great love for the old man.

He went down to the people of the house in great sorrow and said to them: "The old artist is dead."

The next day the youth went to the salon to look at the picture; there was a great throng around it and he said to himself, exultantly: "Ah! at last they appreciate it." He looked over their shoulders; then dimly at the babbling crowd.—The picture was gone. Through its frame was to be seen the green bare walls of the Salon. One would think the frame had never held a picture. Those in authority said the frame should be taken down, and examined for it was of curious workmanship. When this was done there was found in it, cunningly hidden, some strange mechanisms of brass; and motors for the generation of electricity, also there were bits of mirror, lenses of glass, and copper wire curiously twisted. But none ever even guessed the meaning of these things except the youth, the friend of the old dead painter. And of all the throng that was there, of all the artists; there was but one who knew of a surety, that in art the judgment of the world is the judgment of fools.

## THE CATHOLIC PROTECTION AND RESCUE SOCIETY

FOR IMMIGRANT ORPHANS.

The committee had a meeting on Thursday, December 13th. The visiting of the boys under 16, placed in the city, was divided between J. Killoran, vice-president, Michael Clarke, and D. Baxter. The statement about the children placed was very satisfactory. Only one child, in

the country, had to be removed. After New Year's full statement will be brought before the committee about all the boys and girls in the city and all the children placed in the country in 1894. As it was remarked before, the outfittings of the Home, 11 St. Thomas street, are covered by private donations, all other expenses being paid by the societies in England. The following list was read and requested to be published in THE TRUE WITNESS:—

The benefactors of the poor who subscribed already one or more shares of \$5.00 each towards the Irish Conference of St. Vincent de Paul, of St. Ann's parish, in behalf of the Home for Immigrant Orphans:

Chas. Lyman, president, 1 share; J. Killoran, vice-president, 1 do; Wm. Daly, treasurer, 1 do; Pat. O'Reilly, secretary, 1 do; Jas. Rodgers 1 do; M. J. Ryan 1 do; C. Dunn 1 do; J. Quinn 1 do; Chas. McNally 1 do; J. Davis 1 do; late Dan. Shea 1 do; D. Baxter 1 do; P. McDermot 1; J. Cantwell 1; M. Clarke 1; William Turner 1; Joseph Johnson 1; Charles Craine 1; James Griffin 2; John Slattery 1; Andrew Oullinan 1; Hon. Alphonse Desjardins 1; Ald. Thos. Conroy 1; Edw. J. Kennedy, M. D. 1; Gus. Demers, M. D. 1; P. McCrory 1; Rich. McShane 1; F. X. Dube 1; J. Kane 1; Ths. Hanly 1; Wm. Daly, jun. 1; P. Cammerford 1; Jos. McGuire, 1; P. Flannery 1; Dan. Gallery 1; Jas. McCrory (6 Ottawa Street) 1; J. Power (McCord Street) 1; Mich. Savage 1; J. O'Donnell 1; P. Gallery 1; J. O'Neil (Notre Dame Street) 1; Dan. Darragh 1; Eiw. Murphy (Young Street) 1; P. Kannon 1; P. McGurn 1; Dan. Donnelly 1; P. Malone 1; P. McKeown 1; P. McCarthy 1; Wm. Condon 1.

LADIES' LIST.—Mrs. Wm. Brennan 10 shares; Mrs. J. Killoran 1; Mrs. Joseph Gareau 1; Mrs. Ths. Gallery 1; Mrs. Wid. Doheney 1; Mrs. Loignon 1.

(To be continued.)

## TRIBUTE TO THE DEAD PREMIER.

Hon. J. J. Curran's Address at the Sir John A. Macdonald Club.

In consideration of the fact that Hon. Mr. Curran's address, on the death of Sir John Thompson, was the only one delivered by an Irish Catholic representative, we deem it proper to give our readers the benefit of those touching remarks.

The president called upon Hon. J. J. Curran, the Solicitor-General, who said: "The occasion that brings us together is unexpressibly sad. What can my feeble words add to the chorus of pain and praise that resounds in wailing notes around us! How could I be expected to give utterance even to my own sentiments on the calamity that has befallen our country through the death of Canada's

BEST AND BRIGHTEST SON, the Right Hon. Sir John Thompson? He was my friend, I loved him as a brother; he treated me as one. He was a great man; the Empire, the English and French-speaking worlds testify to it. He was a good man—that his bitterest foes have with singular unanimity accorded to his memory. As a rising statesman the statute book of his native province gives evidence of his ability, and in later years the imprint of his genius is to be seen on every subject within the jurisdiction of the Dominion Parliament. Outside of his Canadian home—in London, in Washington and in Paris, he has left imperishable monuments to his fame. The principles of the Right Hon. Sir John Macdonald, so ably maintained by Sir John Abbott, our lamented leader had accepted as a precious inheritance. Sir John Macdonald, aided by the patriotism of those who surrounded him, had cast deep into the soil the foundations of our national existence and raised to grand proportions the sacred edifice of our destinies. He would have died poor but for the generosity of his friends. Sir John Abbott arrived upon the scene, and though independent as to pecuniary means, yet suffering intensely from a cruel malady had devoted his declining years to the perpetuation of the work of his illustrious predecessor. Sir John Thompson, taking up the herculean task, had labored with the mighty problems of Canadian nationhood, and amidst untold difficulties had struggled for the good and glory of his country and the Empire, crowning his illustrious career by laying down his life at the foot of the throne. His brief but brilliant

career is a model for the public men of to-day, as well as for future generations of servants of the people. He has given a tone to the leadership that will cause Canada to exact private worth as well as public virtue. He was no mere wire-pulling politician, and knavish tricks he despised, and I can apply to him now, with still greater force than I once had the privilege of doing on the floor of Parliament, on a memorable occasion, the words of Norman Macleod:—

"Perish policy and cunning,  
Perish all that fear the light,  
Whether winning, whether losing,  
Fear the Lord and do the right."

Sir John Thompson's influence for good has already made itself felt throughout the country. He was persecuted for conscience sake, but those who assailed him are amongst the most grief-stricken to-day. Religious differences are already effaced in such matters, and Mr. Bowell's personal purity and public probity will make him acceptable to all creeds and classes. In this solemn moment can we forget Lady Thompson and her five orphan children in her and their unutterable affliction. Most affectionate husband, tender-hearted father that he was, he had to sacrifice the interests of his home upon the altar of his country, Surely the appeal to be made for the stricken family will find an echo in every generous Canadian heart, and on the tombstone of the illustrious departed will be engraved indelibly: "His Countrymen were not Ungrateful."

## THE CHRISTMASTIDE.

"Gloria-in-excelsis." Bright angels sang,  
In ages past, one Christmas morn,  
As hovering o'er that strawy-bed,  
Wheron the Infant-Christ was laid,  
While Mary Immaculate meek and pure,  
Did o'er her Son and Saviour pur,  
Forth sacred praise and mother's love,  
A greeting from the Holy Dove;  
Exultant sang the joyous hymn,  
Of "Peace on earth, good-will to men."

O wilder, sweeter, swells the strain,  
A thousand Seraph-hands again,  
Sweep o'er their harpsichords of gold,  
O bliss, immortal bliss untold,  
But stay—what pen can e'er describe,  
That rapturous strain, that heavenly tide,  
That bore the grandest song of love,  
That e'er graced earth, or heaven above,  
And wakes soul-schos now, as when  
Peace came to earth, hope came to men,

O Joy of Joys—a God is born,  
Jesus the Only begotten Son,  
Of the Most High and Holy One,  
Has come to claim frail, fallen man,  
From out the wearisome path of sin,  
A God! The prophet, God and law,  
Born in a stable strewed with straw,  
O happy tidings that they sang,  
With gladness ringing now as then,  
"Sweet peace on earth, good-will to men."

The shepherds left their flocks alone,  
And guided by that star that shone,  
Came where it paused o'er Bethlehem,  
And falling did the Christ adore,  
The Promised One, of ancient love,  
The Word made flesh, the Truth divine,  
The world's great hope, that Christmas time,  
The kings and wisemen also came,  
With treasured offerings to Him then  
O Peace of earth, O Hope of men.

Can we behold a scene so rare,  
Those azure eyes, the golden hair,  
The dimpled hand, the brow of snow,  
Can we, unmoved, behold a knave,  
So soon those eyes will blinded be,  
While tears for weak mortality,  
Will mingle with the sacred dew,  
That dyes those locks a crimson hue,  
While by those self same hand will hang,  
"Twixt heaven and earth the Hope of men.

Then hark the Christmas from afar,  
A vigil kept that holy hour,  
A blessing greet that sacred morn,  
The Bride-room of the Church was born,  
True friendship's brightest fires do burn,  
To greet the Dear One's glad return,  
While love for our sweet Infant-guest,  
Will draw us closer to His breast,  
Dear Christmas tide, we hail thee then,  
With "Peace on earth, good-will to men."

West Constable, N. Y. MABEL A. LONG.

## CHRISTMAS MUSIC

AT ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL, DOMINION SQ.

At midnight Mass, first performance in America of Felix Godefrois', "Messe de la Resurrection," arranged for men's voices by G. Couture, with organ and string orchestra accompaniment. At the Offertory, Theodore Dubois' "Adeste Fideles," arranged for men's voices by G. Couture, with cello obligato, by Mr. Charbonneau. Soloists: Messrs. Edouard Lebel, Antoine Destroismaisons, Frederic Pelletier, E. Guillemette. Organist, Mr. Octave Pelletier. Choir-master, Mr. G. Couture.

At 10 a.m., High Mass, the same music as at Midnight Mass.

At Vespers and Benediction, 3.30 p.m.:—Gounod's hymn, "Jesu Redemptor omnium"; Mozart's "Magnificat"; Theodore Dubois' "Adeste Fideles"; Bach-Gounod's "Ave Maria," sung by Mr. Ed. Lebel, with violin obligato by Mr. J. J. Goulet; Riga's "Tantum ergo"; Gounod's "Laudate Dominum omnes gentes," with organ and orchestra accompaniment.