

"Truth is Catholic; proclaim it ever, and God will effect the rest."—BALMEZ.

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Exemptions and Principle.

(WE START FOR THE QUARTER.)

"Exemptions are wrong in principle," and therefore there is no use in discussing them in particular. This is the way a writer in one of the dailies undertakes to settle a question which has for years divided the public mind.

It is a handy way, surely, as far as it goes, and satisfactory, we suppose, to one who chooses to follow it, yet it is not without drawbacks.

When a child, hard pressed to give a reason for something it has done, makes answer "Oh because," we have to be content with the reply on the ground that it is all we can get, but surely are not bound to consider it either logical or conclusive. There is neither reason or enlightenment in it.

Of course not every one is able off hand, or even upon reflection, to give account of the real grounds upon which he acts, and therefore the very young, the feeble-minded and the unthinking are readily excused in such emergency.

But when a protentious writer puts on his wig and spectacles, and solemnly takes seat in the chair of public instruction, we have a right to expect from him more than the "oh because." What is quite amusing, may even delight, in the little one, may be in him, both contemptible and criminal, from his stupidity and the deception it works. And this is about the measure of our charge against this writer. If he believes his own statement that exemptions are wrong in principle, his knowledge of the subject is contemptible; and the case is worse if without believing, he nevertheless puts it forward as true.

And first as to the proposition "Exemptions are wrong in principle," what does that exactly mean? There is a hair-splitting about it which needs to be dissipated. For as we know that patriotism has been described as the last refuge of scoundrelism, so are we well aware that the appeal to principle is a principle—so vainly printed that they may mean anything or nothing—in very often the strongest card in the hands of a dim-witted or pseudo-headed, or partisan advocate of a hobby. And the vague word, in its word, on account of its many uses, helps him in his knavery. What does he mean here by principle? It is defined, in dictionaries and other standard authorities, as the source, the ruling, or reason, or rule of a thing; and many other significations it hath, passing we fear the comprehension of many who roll it glibly enough off tongue or pen. But in none of these can it be so carefully and justly used as exemptions to a law, which are simply positive can be only general, never universal.

All positive law admits of exceptions, and this is a fact. For instance it is the law that a man who knows what he is doing signs a contract is bound to keep it. But hardly has this been stated when the same authority goes down to the bottom of the subject, and feigns to be under twenty-one years of age, or the like, he is not bound. Is there any contradiction here? or what our friend of the Daily would call departure from principle? Certainly not. The principle of the first part is the enactment is sound, and so is the principle of the second. They do not contradict, but only modify and adjust each other so as to make the united action of the two come as near as man can make it to being a perfect justice, and the very various interests and persons affected by it. Without the first there would be no security for contract, without the second contract could be unjustly enforced. The wisdom of the law temper itself to the exact best by means of exceptions.

Now a tax law like every other law must admit of exceptions and indeed is and always has been full of them. At first sight it would seem that the very body man, woman and child, is the recipient of benefits, so all without exception, should pay. Yet who wants a poll-tax? Well you make property the basis of your rates? And if so, how much and what kind of property? Only land, according to Henry George's theory, or again all kinds and descriptions of possessions? The first may hold to be unjust, and the second would be simply intolerable. Men would run out of the woods to become savages rather than submit to such a nuisance.

Neither to persons, then, or yet as to things is there a straight rule. The law and the horse, and the bicycle pay no tax but the dog does. The man the dairy-man, the peddler and so on are put under tribute, the blacksmith, the carpenter, the tailor, and others go free. It is the same as to the worth of dry goods or furniture and pay no rate for the right to do it, but if I remove to No. 28 and put up a shingle announcing tobacco, or liquor refreshments, you are down upon me as the for-profit and so on ad infinitum.

Now I am not finding fault with these anomalies. I don't know enough about the subject to be able to say how far the system we live under is the best, or the best, but I do say, without any

hesitation, that it is supremely impudent in any one, looking at the way taxes are levied here and elsewhere, to come out dogmatically with the statement that exemptions are wrong in principle. And it is as stupid and foolish as it is impudent—and intended to be mischievous. And the writer we are speaking of knows that better than we can tell him, but is so excited by fur against one class of exemptions, that he outrages common sense, and injures his own reputation, in order to do religion an injury. We have condoned enough in the judgment and fair play of the religious elements in Toronto, to believe that they will settle this vexed question on the lines of reason and justice, and so silence the howls of fanaticism.

The Mission of the Irish Language.

Father Peter O'Leary, of Castlyona, Co. Cork has addressed a letter to 'The Dublin Freeman' criticizing Dr. Atkinson's recent references to the Irish language which he said is not a fitting language for children. Father O'Leary says that Dr. Atkinson's name is one for whom I have the greatest respect and respect since I first began to read his works in the field of Irish literature. The feeling has been a good deal more than respect. It has been a feeling of sincere admiration for Atkinson on account of the great labor and the long time of time which he has so generously and so perseveringly devoted to the interests of the language in which I was reared. There is, however, one fact connected with this which I do not know, and I have been fully aware of it since the first time I read any of his works, but I have not spoken of it, at least publicly. It is the fact that Dr. Atkinson, really and truly, does not know Irish. I am forced to say this, not to do him wrong, but in his evidence from doing the enormous mischief which the influence of his name must cause it to do, unless that influence is counteracted before the public by letting the public see plainly that Dr. Atkinson does not know Irish.

Dr. Atkinson belongs to a class of students of Irish who imagine they know all about it but who as a matter of fact are utterly ignorant of its inner nature and of its greatest beauties. Up to the present they have had a high opinion of it, but it is now being driven furiously through all the mazes of "Sanskrit" and "comparative philology" some Irish peasant could explain to them in two words, if they would only have the common sense to ask him; putting the most absurd interpretations upon our language before our very eyes, and telling us coolly that they know nothing about it, doing all this without the slightest dread of criticism from any quarter. That high time is gone, gentlemen. The Gaelic League is abroad. It is about to bring a strong light to bear on all your hazy lucubrations. Before you are allowed to descend in future upon the philological merits of an Irish sentence you will have to parse it correctly first. What on earth put it into your sapient heads that it is sweeping opinions and knowledge of old Irish that of living Irish? You will very soon find out what a mistake you have made. You will soon find out that what you imagine to be a knowledge of old Irish is a mere figment of your own fancy.

There is only one effective instrument by means of which the older forms of the Irish language can be interpreted. That instrument is the living Irish language. To talk of preserving the beautiful forms of old Irish without the help of the beautiful forms of living Irish is a species of madness of which only those who know the living Irish and have used it for this purpose, can be guilty. It is sweeping opinions, as Dr. Atkinson, in his evidence, has expressed very strong, very "deliberate," very sweeping opinions. I have to tell your readers that those opinions are exactly as valueless as all the other strong "deliberate" opinions of the kind which have, for many a day, been thrust upon us, in regard to our own business, by people who have never, never understood it. I will ask your readers, therefore, to pay no attention whatever to the opinions of Dr. Atkinson regarding Irish.

Lorette Chapel, Gaelph.

For the past six weeks the chapel of the Sisters of Loretto, at Gaelph, has been undergoing a complete renovation. The chief work of course, has been the painting and decorating, and the Sisters will worship next Sunday and thereafter in a chaste and beautiful chapel, which will be a delight to the eye and an aid to the devotion of the faithful. The interior is finished with the walls of natural color, and the border, all handwork, gives a most artistic finish. The altar and canopy are in beautiful taste and gold, giving a splendid effect to the foreground.

Father Perot in Paris.

Father Perot, the celebrated composer of "The Holy Mass," who has been in the world as his other gifted fellow-countrymen, Macneil and Leocevallo, is at present in Paris. He is to conduct performances of his "Reurrection of Christ" early in March. Last week he was in Montreal, where he was to meet the ladies and gentlemen who form the Committee for the production of the oratorio. The word "patronage" has been used in connection with this work, but it is out of place. A great composer like Father Perot has no need of patronage, and he is conferring more honor on the Parisians by coming among them than they on him. Monsieur Claret, the Pappal Nuncio, and those invited to his residence in the Rue Log-

onde had the good fortune to hear Perot play on the grand piano some fragments from the new oratorio the "Nativity," which he is composing.

RHYME OF THE "SWEET GAELIC TONGUE."

(After the manner of the old Irish poets.)

Along the harbor wandered when the heavy night had fallen,
And Fairy winds had vanished from the valleys of Tyr-Owon,
There in the sad and silent dawn he heard a voice make Gaelic
For the lost Gaelic language of Ireland.

Upon a broken Ogam stone sat Eriu's Genius fair;
The tears were in her shining eyes; the dew began to glisten on her hair.
She leant upon her sobbing harp and sad beyond compare
Her dirge for the Sweet Tongue of Ireland.

"Oh radiant the mountain-slopes of haunted Dun-na-Call
And soft in Royal Aleach the joyous sun-beams fall.
The misty breeze from Arran spreads its wings o'er the sea,
Bright veiling the grey towers of Ireland."

"These ancient belfry, Devonish, stands firm as of yore
And Eriu sings a changeless song by aylvan chanogere
But bitter woe is on me that I hear the sound no more
Of the Grand Gaelic language of Ireland."

"Ah! Past the day when Ferdiach his gleaming sword upraised,
When Finn's unrivalled warriors the foeman view'd, amazed;
When Miamh 'Of the Head of Gold' on comely Oisín gazed,
And murmured the soft tongue of Ireland."

"Behold his flashing summer sea the Gulf of Connacht fair,
Weep Delride, and Uana's sons that fill an early grave—
Thy fairy towers, Tir-Tairnit, flame o'er the western wave
Oh mystic the stories of Ireland."

"What shout is it by Aha-Buidhe that makes the Saxon quail
Lay-Dharg Aba! O'Neill is there to lead the charging Gael!
Rush on, O'Keran and Galoglais—For God and Inisfaul!
Sublime your wild war-cry of Ireland!"

"Alas! Where pealed that slogan-shout now reigns the Saxon Tongue,
And thou, who Red O'Donnell from his crags resolute sprung!
And thou MacMorrough-Kavanaugh, when thy proud challenge rung,
We miss the strong Gaelic of Ireland."

MACMAHON'S CHARGE.

(WRITTEN FOR THE REGISTER.)

HOW THE GREAT FRANCO-IRISHMAN BROUGHT GLORY TO THE FRENCH ARMY.

It was in the Crimean campaign and one of the hottest days of that bloody struggle. The Russians were battling like the brave men they were to retain the water-fort of the Malakoff—and the allied armies were repeatedly baffled by the stubborn defence. From a small outlying fort under shelter of the Malakoff a two-gun battery played with deadly and exasperating effect on the French and British lines. The impetuous French could stand this stinging snipe no longer. It would be a sanguinary struggle to attempt to take it, and the result was a very doubtful one. But the gallant Zouaves were panting for the charge, and their general the great Franco-Irishman MacMahon determined they should have that glory before the eyes of their allies.

Hearing that the French general was determined on this desperate attempt, General England called to him an aide-de-camp, an Irish orderly sergeant, and sent a despatch to the French lines. The aide-de-camp sped on his mission and found MacMahon outside his tent, hastily scribbling an order on his sabre scabbard for a waiting orderly. At the Irish officer's salute the general looked up. He was as cool as though he were only ordering dinner instead of one of the most glorious charges of history, "I bring MacMahon's compliments, and say that five thousand of our best troops are at your service when you wish to call upon them." MacMahon smiled pleasantly. "Give my thanks to your general," he said, "but I think my own men will want all this gift for themselves."

The sergeant saluted and was retiring when the general called him back. "You're a grand fellow, you're not? You're a 'Ye sir,'" said the sergeant, "and I'll be proud of this day all my life!" "Why, my good man," asked MacMahon, "because, I'll be able to tell them in Ireland I spoke to the great general MacMahon, and that you're interested in them?" "From Galway, sir," answered the sergeant. "Why," said the great general, extending his hand and clasping that of the sergeant warmly, "you're the next best thing to my own country of Clare. I am delighted to meet you, my sincere thanks to your general."

The sergeant retired, a moment later the French angles rang and the Zouaves burst up the height, swept by a deadly fire from the Russian fort, on and up went the brave fellows closing up to the muzzle of the onomy's guns, the battle cloud rolled over them and the day declared. The British and French men rapidly. Again and again the bugle rang out and MacMahon flew regiment after regiment up the hill to their support. He had the command of fifteen thousand men was in the charge.

Then the Zouaves burst into the battery like the sea over Holland's banks. An awful struggle, hand to hand, MacMahon's men fighting the British regiments grow restive. The officers have a hard time to keep the Irish troops in position. They want to rush forward to the fight with brave MacMahon. But the suspense is only momentary. The French are heard, down goes the eagle and up the standard of France, the Russians are driven out, their own guns are turned upon themselves. The day is won.

That was the first charge which won the French troops enduring honor from their English allies. One interesting fact remains to be stated. The Irish orderly sergeant who carried the despatch to General England, MacMahon's aide-de-camp, was Toronto, Sergeant Patrick Harte of Niagara street.

The Federal Life Assurance Company.

We publish in this issue of THE REGISTER the annual report of the "Federal Life" of Hamilton. Although located in the "Ambitious City," this company is entitled to rank amongst the leading assurance institutions of Toronto—while, it is needless to say, are through the Dominion, at the head of the class in sure investment and profitable results. It is gratifying to find that the President that the income of the "Federal" for 1898 has been larger than that of any year in its history and that the security of the policy-holders' invested funds is a fact of record. In view of the adoption of the report the President referred to the steady and substantial growth of the Company's business; the large increase from year to year in its income, assets and surplus. He stated that while the expenditure had been decreased 65 per cent. in the last year, the assets of the Company had increased 19.90 per cent. and the surplus 37.92 per cent. and the reserve funds 31.41 per cent. the capital

and assets having now reached \$1,476,280 41.

The Federal Life Assurance Company of Hamilton is under the careful supervision of Manager Macneil, and this, in a large measure, will account for its unimpeded progress and prosperity.

THE LATE ARCHBISHOP.

Formal Presentation of the Civic Resolutions of Sympathy.

On last Friday afternoon the formal presentation was made at St. Michael's Palace of the civic resolution of sympathy passed in connection with the death of the late Most Rev. John Walsh, Archbishop of Toronto. The municipal officers who took part in the brief but impressive ceremony were His Worship Mayor Shaw, Mr. John Blewitt, City Clerk, and Comptroller Bivins. The presentation was made to Very Rev. J. J. McCann, Administrator of the archdiocese with whom were the priests of the Cathedral parish, Rev. Frank Ryan, rector, Rev. F. Rohleder, Chancellor and Rev. Dr. Trosoy, also Rev. James Walsh, rector of the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, nephew of the late Archbishop. Among the laymen present were Col. Mason, Joseph Connelly, R.O.A., M. O'Connor and P. F. Cronin.

His Worship in presenting the memorial album recalled the heartfelt sympathy with which the council of the city of Toronto put itself on record in the early part of August last when the sad and unexpected news of the death of the late Archbishop Walsh was known. The resolution was the spontaneous and unanimous expression of the members of the council and he need not add the citations of every creed and class as well, there being but one feeling that the death of Archbishop Walsh was a civic and national loss. At the time it was a matter of necessity to allow the engraving of the resolution in a suitable form to stand over and be trusted that the album he now presented in some manner reflected the sincerity of their unanimous wish that the happy memory of the late Archbishop would endure in the hearts of the citizens of Toronto. The Mayor then presented the memorial to Father McCann.

The Very Reverend Administrator acknowledged with gratitude the sympathetic action of the city council of Toronto in passing the resolution of condolence in August last. He had not forgotten how deeply the manner and form of the resolution were appreciated by the Catholic clergy and laity of the city and archdiocese, and he assured his worship that the effect of this expression of the council and of the citizens generally would not soon pass from their minds. He particularly thanked Mayor Shaw as the spirit which the gift of the late Archbishop was beautiful and enduring form. In receiving the memorial on behalf of the clergy and Catholic community generally, he assured the Mayor, City Clerk and Comptroller Bivins that the spirit which the gift was tendered was thoroughly appreciated, and would be treasured in the archives of the archdiocese. Father McCann's brief speech closed the proceedings.

The memorial album will deserve description. It is a costly morocco-bound volume, a little larger in size than the ordinary library book. The front cover bears a chaste Roman ornament, standing upon a base of classical proportions over which maple leaves and bunches of grapes are artistically arranged with the following inscription thrown into relief in plain letters:

"And doublet unto thee is given
A life that bears immortal fruit
In such great offices that suit
The full-grown energies of heaven."

The pages of the album are doublet vellum, by itself presenting a striking study in architecture, the feature of which is fidelity to the Catholic idea, in the general scheme suggestive of the Italian renaissance, in the insignia of the archiepiscopal office and the lovely contrasts of coloring, which the gift is a purple that runs through every page. The frontispiece of the Roman cross surrounded with grapes and maple leaves is repeated on the first page of the vellum and the reverse side being the reverse of coloring, which the gift is a purple that runs through every page. The frontispiece of the Roman cross surrounded with grapes and maple leaves is repeated on the first page of the vellum and the reverse side being the reverse of coloring, which the gift is a purple that runs through every page. The frontispiece of the Roman cross surrounded with grapes and maple leaves is repeated on the first page of the vellum and the reverse side being the reverse of coloring, which the gift is a purple that runs through every page.

facing this is the most striking detail of the work a golden cross with the words: "Requiescat in Pace." The execution of this page has to be seen to be appreciated. The album was designed and engraved by Mr. F. H. Howard, R.C.A. and it is a credit to his Catholic appreciation of art.

Sir Wilfrid will not Enact Prohibition.

Ald. F. S. Spence, Toronto, Secretary of the Dominion Alliance has received the following letter from Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

DEAR MR. SPENCE.—When the delegation of the Dominion Alliance waited upon the Government last fall to ask as a consequence of the plebiscite the introduction of prohibitory legislation, they based their demand upon the fact that, on the total of the vote cast, there was a majority in favor of the principle of prohibition. The exact figures of the votes recorded were not at that time accurately known, but the official figures, which we have now, show that on the question to the electors 278,487 voted yes and 284,671 voted nay. After the official figures had been made public, it was contended by some of the opponents of prohibition that the margin of difference between the majority and minority was so slight that it practically constituted a tie, and there was, therefore, no occasion for the Government to pronounce either one way or the other. The Government does not share that view. We are of the opinion that the fairest way of approaching the question is by the consideration of the total vote cast in favor of prohibition, leaving aside for the moment the vote recorded altogether the vote recorded against it. In that view of the question, the records show that the electorate of Canada, to which the question was submitted, comprised 1,538,814 voters, and of that number 523,238 voted in favor of a trifle over one fifth, affirmed the conviction in the principle of prohibition. If we remember that the object of the plebiscite was to give an opportunity to those who have expressed the sense of prohibition, who believed that the people were with them, and that the question were voted upon by itself, without any other issue which might detract from the consideration, a majority of the electorate would have responded in favor of the Canadian people prepared and ready for its adoption, it must be admitted that the expectation was not justified by the event.

On the other hand, it was argued by you and yourself and others, that the plebiscite campaign was carried out by the friends of prohibition without any expenditure of money and without the usual excitement of political agitation, the vote recorded in favor of it was comparatively a large one. This statement I did not then controvert, nor do I controvert it here and now. I would simply remark that the honesty of the vote did not suffer from the absence of the usual excitement of the members of the electorate, and that the vote recorded even if the totality of the vote recorded have been somewhat increased by such cause its moral force would not have been made any stronger. I venture to submit for your consideration, and the consideration of the members of the Dominion Alliance, who believe in prohibition as the most efficient means of suppressing the evils of intemperance, that no good purpose would be served by forcing upon the people a measure which is shown by the vote to have the support of less than 25 per cent. of the electorate.

Neither would it serve any good purpose to enter here into further controvert on the many incidental points discussed before us.

My object is simply to convey to you the conclusion that in our judgment the expression of public opinion recorded at the polls in favor of prohibition did not represent such a proportion of the electorate as would justify the introduction by the Government of a prohibitory measure.

I have the honor to be, dear Mr. Spence, Yours very sincerely,
WILFRID LAURIER.

Ottawa, March 4, 1899.

St. Mary's Literary and Athletic Association.

The St. Mary's Catholic Literary and Athletic Association is still on the boom. At their meeting Sunday afternoon, the candidates were elected to membership and the executive committee organized. The Athletic sub-committee are working hard and will in a very short time have their various teams equipped for the summer. The meeting was held at the residence of Very Rev. Administrator McCann and Mr. F. Cronin, editor of THE REGISTER, each of whom made brief addresses. Mr. J. Drohan delivered the regular club lecture on "The conduct of our members on the Athletic Field." Hand ball will receive a good share of attention from the athletic committee.

TOTALLY DRAFF.—Mr. S. E. Crandall, Port Perry, writes: "I contracted a severe cold last winter, which resulted in my becoming blind in one eye and partially so in the other. After trying various remedies, and consulting several doctors, without obtaining any relief, I was advised by Dr. THOMAS' EXTRACTUM. I purchased the medicine and poured a little of it in my ear, and before one-half the bottle was used my hearing was completely restored. I have heard of other cases of deafness being cured by the use of this medicine."