

Religious Celebration in Honor of Labor Day.

Sunday evening witnessed two imposing ceremonies, in St. Patrick's and Notre Dame Churches, the occasion being the religious celebration in connection with Labor Day.

The vast edifice of Notre Dame held nearly 15,000. When the hour arrived the church was taxed to its utmost capacity. The mighty sound of human voices as they filled the sacred edifice with a sweet hymn was soul-inspiring. In the Sanctuary were His Grace Archbishop Bruchesi and His Lordship Bishop Archambault, of Joliette. The sermon was preached by Rev. Father Labelle, S.S., director of the Montreal College.

Father Labelle, in his opening remarks, said that Christ came into the world to preach to the multitude at a period when the practice of manual labor was in its lowest stage. He raised the dignity of labor by Himself choosing a trade. He was known as the carpenter's son of Nazareth.

"Workingmen of Montreal," he went on, "render homage to your fellow-workingman, the Christ God. By adopting a trade He has made the workingmen the most powerful of modern societies, as well as the most respected and dignified."

"Now, as He has blessed and re-established labor, what does He want of us? The answer is in the words of my text, 'Venite Omnes.'"

"It is only through Him and His Church that you will keep and safeguard the knowledge and sovereign rights that you have gained. No power in the world can teach you more exactly, more rightly and more impartially your duties as workingmen than the church. In conscience, in harmony, in respect, in justice and in charity will be found the definite and true solution of the great problems of to-day."

"The Church knows it, and she teaches all to be good, just, respectful and patient. It is thus the church shows the workingman his duties while she teaches the rich and powerful in terms still stronger the practice of consideration, justice and pacification. If her pulpits were silenced, how much trouble would exist? Who can foresee the fatal consequences which will follow the loss to the individual and to social life if the Church would cease pointing out the path of duty to all, to rich and to poor, to the masses and the classes alike?"

"She found the laborer crushed beneath the burden of his woe, agonizing in all the horrors of discontent and slavery, she lifted him up and taught him his rights, she shed the light of hope and knowledge on his dark night of anguish, and sternly pointed out the way of justice to his master. The crushing and unbearable burden, which we know has been placed on the shoulders of the laborers in some countries, will never be his lot in this Province of Quebec. When the Church speaks, the people listen. The Church recommends moderation, goodness and respect for the rights of others. Master and servant recognize the obligations they owe to each other. While human nature exists, there will always be some points in dispute between capital and labor. But you will settle these disputes amicably, in all patience, in all justice, and in all prudence; or you will arbitrate, giving to the Church entire confidence in her decision. Listen to the church and abide by her, and your security and happiness will be guaranteed, for the Church not only teaches your duties, but she defends your rights. It is an incontestable truth that you have as many rights as duties. Nevertheless this truth, so clear, has not always been seen as it is to-day. It has cost the Church not a little agony to right the wrongs of the laborer."

"Whenever new chains were forged on the anvil of injustice by the hammer of selfishness, the Church interposed. Christ being the workingman's brother, both by nature and by divine redemption, the Church claimed it a crime against Him to use the workingman as a mere machine. He should be treated as a man, as a husband, as a father, as the fellow-worker of Christ—as another Christ."

"Owing to the revolutions in the industrial world, capital and labor exist as two separate, distinct classes—the Church does not want antagonism, for antagonism is opposed to the natural law and to reason. She wants harmony. Remember that in 1891, when the question was asked whether the workingman should receive the price of labor or the sum necessary to all his needs as a fa-

ther and a husband, the late Pontiff Leo XIII. answered that wages should be calculated on the basis of the necessities of life, 'Salary is a bread-winner,' said Leo XIII. in his famous encyclical, 'and all contracts that do not assure a workingman his needs and the needs of his family should be revised.'

"Thus the Church without being hostile to the rich is favorable to the poor. She appeals to justice when others only appeal to charity. She is a mother devoted to her children, and be not deceived by those who teach otherwise. She has a right to your love. You should love the Church and prove it by being submissive to her doctrines, but especially by the perfection of your Christian lives."

"The weakening of the Christian life is the principal cause of the social conflict between capital and labor. It is sad to relate that in this hunger and thirst after worldly pleasures eternal happiness is lost sight of. The rich want to increase their wealth and the poor covet the fortunes of the rich. Behold, then, the two classes in battle array, in the clutches of a bitter conflict though they are destined by nature to live harmoniously! It should not be thus if the evangelical law of justice and love were better observed."

In conclusion, the preacher said: "Be honest Christians. Seek your last ends, not by sensual pleasures. You will be happy even in this world, if you seek your eternal happiness. As in all things, we need a model. Turn again your eyes to Christ the Workingman! Companions of His laborers, you will also share His eternal happiness."

In answer to the request of the preacher to bless all present, His Grace Archbishop Bruchesi arose and from the Sanctuary spoke very feelingly.

"Dear workingman: Yes, from the depths of my soul, I bless you. Again this year, as last year, you have come in thousands in answer to my appeal. It is the Church which you honor, who invited you by my voice; it is to her you come to seek guidance and counsel, while you profess your faith, your submission and your love. You are the army of workingmen, who pray and direct their hopes towards things superior to the perishable things of this earth. Workingmen, Notre Dame was eager to open wide her doors for you, to hold you again for one hour. A few minutes ago your singing shook the mighty roof of this church. We also shook with happiness and with holy pride, and, in the tabernacle, the invisible God, hidden in the Host, the Man-God, who deigned to become a workingman like you, sees you also; He hears you and showers on you at this moment the treasures of His Sacred Heart. Behold, then, established the desired feast, the religious feast of labor! You might include it in your programme. It will be a source of grace and a title of glory for the workingmen of Montreal. But why should a cloud hover over this incomparable demonstration? Is it true that employer and employee cannot live in concord and peace?"

"Alas! strikes exist in our midst; we behold them with regret and we are filled with fear that they will become too general in the near future. 'Strikes are a misfortune for the individual, for the family and for society; and I know that the employee deplores them as much as the employer. I had a new proof of it yesterday in the touching letter a large number of you sent me. Is there not then some means to stop and to prevent them?'"

"On all sides the difficulties between capital and labor are discussed. But who will solve them? I will tell you. There is only one and He is the Master of all, our Lord Jesus Christ, who has in all truth said that without Him we can do nothing. Yes, He has solved the problem, by the simple words which fell from His divine lips and which men seem to have forgotten: 'Love one another; love your neighbor as yourself.'"

"Ah! If men only loved truly each other, order would be observed, justice respected, and the rights of all, employer and employee, would be recognized; the employer would pay his employee his proper salary, and the employee would not put forth pretensions and demands which could not be approved by justice and reason."

"Without doubt, the right to unite

exists among all professions, all industries, all trades; and the abuse which may be made of unions does not prevent us from voicing the right of unions."

"If, then, workingmen wish to unite, as other groups of society, they may do so freely. Is it not from unions that sprang forth those admirable corporations of the Middle Ages from the maternal breast of the Church and which Leo XIII. praised in his immortal encyclical? But it is essentially important that these corporations or unions, neither by their by-laws, nor in their organization, nor in their acts, be opposed to rights clearly established, and that they do not claim what is evidently opposed to the social order. And notwithstanding the good intentions of men, faults and imperfections may creep into all their enterprises. There must be found a sure and efficacious means to solve those difficulties, be they what they may, whether questions of principal, questions born of accidents, of particular facts, regarding time or place."

"The means for this solution, my friends, I have already proposed, a conference of the respective delegates of the parties interested, and, if need be, the final decision of a board of arbitrators, recognized and accepted by each party. This is the secret of a lasting peace, this is the solution of the problem, which interests us all, this is practicing the divine precept of brotherly love."

"The happy results which would follow such a conference, you have just noted in that memorable event which closed the most bloody war of modern times and obtained for the two nations a peace which made the whole world rejoice. How many times already have not the wise and conciliating arbitration of the Popes prevented disastrous results and produced inestimable benefits for peace?"

"Why, then, cannot the same exist again in our midst? And if sacrifices and mutual concessions are needed, why not make them? It is the wish of thousands of families that I express at this moment: it is the wish of the Church; it is also the wish of my own heart. May it be realized and we will sing to God a hymn of our joy and of our thanksgiving."

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was imparted by His Grace, during which the act of consecration to the Sacred Heart was read.

AT ST. PATRICK'S.

At St. Patrick's Church the scene was one of magnificence and grandeur. The beautiful church was seen at its best with its many gorgeous decorations and brilliantly illuminated main altar. In the sanctuary were Bishop Racicot, who presided at the ceremony, assisted by Father Kiernan, of St. Michael's, as deacon, and Father Fahey, of St. Gabriel's, as sub-deacon. There were also present Father Strubbe and Father Holland, of St. Ann's; Fathers Donnelly and Shea, of St. Anthony's; Fathers Casey and Singleton, of St. Agnes; Father Oullinan, of St. Mary's; Father McCrory, of Cote St. Paul; Father Robert Callaghan, Father Martin Callaghan, parish priest, Dr. Luke Callaghan, and Fathers Polan and Peter Heffernan.

The ceremony began with a hymn by the choir, which was followed by the sermon of the evening, delivered by Rev. Martin Callaghan.

"We are on the eve of Labor Day," began Father Callaghan, "a great day, one of the greatest days of the year. A day which should be hailed with universal joy and pride; a day I trust, which will not be marred by any unpleasantness. I hope it will be marked by all that is calculated to leave only the sweetest and noblest memories. May your parade tomorrow be most imposing and impressive. You are preparing yourselves for the coming day by manifesting a spirit of religion, which is immensely to your credit, and by displaying a most commendable zeal for the important cause in which you are engaged."

Father Callaghan then paid an eloquent tribute to His Grace Archbishop Bruchesi and His Lordship Bishop Racicot for organizing the religious part of Labor Day.

"Let us," continued the preacher, "without further delay, turn our attention to the workingmen. Let us hasten to proclaim them the heroes of the hour, as the greatest heroes in the civilization of the world, in the development and aggrandizement of our race. They may be ranked as knights of the most exalted type, and should be niched in the Temple of Fame. By the working men may be understood not only all those who work with their hands, but likewise all those who work with their brains. Labor may be considered something obligatory, something dignified and meritorious. Labor is a law which

cannot be denied or doubted. This law is binding upon all men.

"God is our legislator. He has a right to tell us how we should live. It was He who made us from nothing and for Himself, not for this earth, but for Heaven. His will can not with impunity be ignored or disregarded. He does not wish us to spend our days in idleness. He has decreed we should work. In the book of Job we read: 'Man is made to labor as is the bird to fly.' Not only does He let us know what He wants us to do by the pen of the inspired writer, but also by the trumpet-notes of the creation. Nature inculcates a lesson which we should follow. Look at the sun, does it not rise every morning to dispel the darkness of night and illumine the globe we inhabit? Look at the stars see how they shine in the firmament as so many sentinels. Look at the earth, does it not yield every year in abundance all the fruits we need? Are not the animals and the angels submissive to God's will? Do not the former supply all our wants, and the latter glorify their Maker in the sublimest manner? How can we, the other beings of the divine Omnipotence, claim any exemption from the divine obligation of labor? 'Go to the ant, oh sluggard,' says Holy Writ, 'and she will teach you to labor.'"

"Christ," continued the preacher, "placed labor on a pedestal of glory from which it can never be removed. 'Christ,' says Cardinal Gibbons, 'has shed a halo of glory upon the brow of the workingman.' St. Joseph was a carpenter. Till his thirtieth year Christ was subject to St. Joseph as an apprentice, though reproached for doing so by His enemies. What a sight enrapturing for men and angels. Behold Jesus, true God and true man, the Creator, Preserver and Ruler of the universe, earning his bread by the sweat of His brow, and helping His aged guardian in providing for the wants of the little household by his daily and poorly required toil. He could build millions of worlds better than our own. See Him handling the saw, plane, chisel and other implements of His trade! With King David He in all faith could say: 'I am poor, and in labors from my youth.' Many eminent men have walked in the footsteps of our Divine Lord, and did not disdain labor. Several of the Apostles lived by the fish they caught. St. Paul was a tent-maker. The monks of old tilled the soil and copied manuscripts."

"Labor is not degrading. Vice and irreligion are the only things that can plunge a human being into the lowest abyss of degradation. Labor is not unmeritorious. It may have a root which is bitter, but the fruit which it bears is sweet. It is preferable to prayer, inasmuch as it is a penitential act—an act by which sin can be expiated. At times St. Francis of Sales was obliged to discontinue his devotions, owing to the press of business. He excused himself by saying: 'In this world we must pray by work and action.'"

"Labor is rewarded both in this world and in the next. What a striking contrast between the man who works and the man who does not work! The latter is discontented and restless. He has upon his shoulders a weight he cannot carry, and he is in the way of everybody else. The former is not unhappy. What tranquility in his soul! He is not disturbed or alarmed. Trusting in God, he is satisfied with his day's work and always hoping for the future. He can by himself verify the words of our Lord: 'My yoke is sweet and my burden light.' He is not without a home, though it may be of the humblest description. The bees that gather honey in the summer have always a sufficient provision for the winter. The industrious run no risk for the future. They will not be in want. They will have a competency."

"Employees, fulfil your obligations. Show deference to your employers. They are the visible representatives of the Most High. Pity them. They must have their own sorrows and trials. Do the work assigned to you, and as well as you can. Economize. Save your earnings without stinting yourselves. Do not pamper your children. You were not spoiled by your parents in your early years. Do not spoil your offspring by endorsing their follies and by encouraging their caprices. Avoid all manner of excess. It is not altogether the sum of wages that will benefit you or yours. It is the way in which you spend the money you may earn. How many of both sexes who earn what you will never earn, and still complain of having anything but enough, with twice or three times your salary—who have not at the end of the week, month or year a cent to their credit—who cannot pay their bills and who sink deeper and deeper into debt."



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"Employers, give to those whom you employ the wages they should have. Bear in mind that the times are not what they used to be. Rental is always on the increase. Food is dearer and clothing higher. Though you have a right to a proper compensation for all that you may do, still consider it your bounden duty to see that by the wages you pay your employees do not lack the necessities and ordinary comforts of life."

At the conclusion of Father Callaghan's sermon, Bishop Racicot advanced to the communion rail and addressed the congregation as follows:

"My dear Brethren, I must begin by congratulating you on the large attendance at this beautiful ceremony to-night, and I am sure your pastors must be proud as they gaze on your strong ranks. I can add nothing to the counsels you have just heard from your parish priest, except to advise you to always hear such directions with respect and attention and to follow them carefully. If you do so, you will be sure to reach the goal of your desires, if not in this world, then at least in the next, where the mistakes and injustices of this will all be rectified. You must never forget that man is not created for merely material happiness here below. His end is higher."

"We must die, and all this world about us will pass away. It behooves us, then, when we see men surrounded with wealth and rolling in luxury whom we know to be unworthy of such favors, to remember that man was not made for this only, but that there is a heaven above, where each is to be rewarded according to his deserts. Besides, if you act up to the advice you have received to-night, it is probable that you will meet with worldly success as well as spiritual happiness. I pray God that He may grant you every blessing of this world and the next and I will now give you the Pontifical blessing."

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During Benediction, at which the Bishop officiated, assisted by Fathers Kiernan and Fahey, Father Martin Callaghan read aloud the act of consecration to the Sacred Heart.

GUESTS OF THEIR ALMA MATER.

The former students of the 35th classical course of L'Assomption College, having at their head Hon. Mr. Archambault, president of the Legislative Council, are at present the guests of their Alma Mater. The college authorities have prepared a special programme of amusements for the occasion.