

TOPICS OF THE DAY.

(By An Occasional Contributor.)

Self-effacement is as rare in the world as martyrdom. It seems almost beyond human nature for a man (or woman) to subject every selfish consideration to the attainment of some general good.

Go into another sphere of life. A man has it in his power to do great good for the country, for his co-religionists, or for any worthy cause, but it is necessary that he should allow others to come to the front, receive the credit, while he must keep in the background.

But terrible is the struggle with self, fearful the task that he has to impose upon himself. How many are capable of such self-effacement? Such was the spirit of the monks of old, who saved the world from barbarism, who fed and cherished the flickering light of learning, and who conserved for the use of future generations the great treasures of learning and of science that, without them, would have forever perished.

IF, in every walk of life, men could learn and practise the grand and heroic principle of self-effacement they would certainly be the regenerators of the world, of society, and of the human family.

BRAVE WORDS.—Last week the Bar of Montreal greeted Mr. Justice Henri T. Taschereau with addresses in English and French on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ascending the Bench.

"The allusions which you have so graciously made to the members of my family who have served the Church and the State, to those of my name who have preceded me on the Bench, and to my contemporary relative, the present Chief Justice of Canada, go straight to my heart, and I cannot but be happy at the kindly appreciation which you have expressed of their respective careers.

owe what I am. But in this century, more than ever, every one is the son of his own work when it is a question of personal merit. And I have the conviction that the schedule of my merits is much below your flattering estimate.

What magnificent sentiments, Christian principles and lofty ideas; what a splendid lesson for the young men of the coming generation. We cannot dwell sufficiently long on those few remarks. Let, however, each one, whether he aspires to the professions or to a business career remember these words of Judge Taschereau:—

"At the Bar, as on the Bench, I have tried to walk in the sight of God."

It is glorious to feel that this is the outcome of purely Catholic teaching. This is the living fruit of our system of education. This is what we are all taught in the schools that are directed by our religious teachers, in our colleges, convents, academies. To walk in the sight of God is the very first principle that the Catholic Church lays down as a rule of life for the members of her fold.

CATHOLIC PROCESSIONS.—In France, with its infidel government, it is forbidden to hold Catholic processions, and where there is no formal prohibition it is unsafe for the people to participate in these religious demonstrations. Yet in Germany, with its ultra Protestantism we find not only grand Catholic processions at Cologne, but even the direct representative of the Emperor taking part therein. In America, with its "know-nothingism" of the past and its "A. P. Aism" of the present—which will soon be also of the past—we have the frequent spectacle of immense Catholic processions.

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had to support and to overcome. No other organization that the world has ever known would ever have withstood the assaults of calumny and of persecution that she has triumphantly faced and conquered. If there is aught to show to the eyes of the outsider the real strength of the Church and the utility of all attempts to crush her, it is surely her march down the centuries, the long train of kingdoms, empires and republics that she has left buried in her wake, and the disappearance, one after another, of every enemy that has been raised up against her.

Microbes and Whiskey

HOW ALCOHOL IS PRODUCED.—Some interesting and scientifically accurate information concerning the production of alcohol is given in a recent article in Pearson's Weekly. Liquor drinkers ought to read it. They will find the following extracts entertaining:—

Alcohol burns with a very hot flame. It is easily turned into vapor, and it gives off none of the smokes and other objectionable deposits left behind by oil or coal in burning. These advantages make it an ideal fuel for motor-cars, and the number of motors built to burn alcohol is constantly increasing.

The high duties hitherto imposed on alcohol by civilized countries are now being removed on what is called "denatured" spirit—that is, alcohol rendered unfit for drinking by mixing with it some noxious substance—and consequently its manufacture is increasing greatly. Factories for the production of alcohol are practically run by microbes.

It was just over fifty years ago that two scientists first discovered that the fermentation which turns glucose or sugar into alcohol and carbonic acid is the work of living organisms. These ferment microbes, or yeasts, are of many different kinds, though all are extremely minute in size.

Pasteur, the great French chemist, showed how greatly success in beer brewing depends on the use of pure yeasts—that is, of certain definite forms of microbes. For every separate kind of beer one special yeast must be used and no other. This has led to the establishment in Germany and elsewhere of large factories or laboratories, where microbes of special breeds are carefully grown, and then dried for export.

Unlike other living creatures, a microbe can be completely withered and dried up for an almost indefinite period, and will then revive to perfect life in moisture and warmth. It is a very peculiar fact about the microbes that run breweries that those who live and work on the top of beer are quite different from those which exist at the bottom. The heavy British beers are all the work of the "Top Fermentation Yeasts;" the lighter German and Austrian lagers are the product of the "Bottom Fermentation Yeasts."

SEND BOYS TO COLLEGE.

How many parents make the serious mistake of putting their boys to work young. One out of a thousand such rises high, the rest never rise. Their chances are blighted for life.

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THE RECENT CONCLAVE

Special services were recently held in the Cathedral at Baltimore, in honor of the election of Pius X. His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons preached the sermon on the occasion.

"The virtues of humility, sincerity, candor and benevolence are stamped on his features. I can characterize him in one sentence by saying that 'he is a man of God and a man of the people.' His name is idolized in Venice and along the Adriatic on account of his charities toward the poor.

"We need not be surprised at the emotion of the Pope when his election was announced, for he was called to the most sublime position to which any man on earth can aspire. The Papacy is the most ancient of all existing dynasties. It had flourished for centuries when the oldest empire now existing was established.

"At the time of the conclave and for weeks preceding it, Rome was full of newspaper reporters gathered from various parts of the civilized world. They were there to furnish the earliest news to the journals which they represented. The great majority of these journalists were men of truth and honor.

"I was present at the conclave and took part in its proceedings, and, without revealing its secrets, I can most positively assure you and the American people that the election of the Pope was conducted with absolute freedom, with the utmost fairness and impartiality, and with a dignity and solemnity becoming the august assemblage of the Sacred College and the momentous consequences of their suffrages.

"I have witnessed debates in the British Parliament, in the French Chambers and in both houses of Congress, and I must candidly say that in sobriety of language and in courteous deportment of members toward one another, the College of Cardinals surpassed them all. And this is the more noteworthy when we consider that some twelve different nationalities, swayed by as many national characteristics, were represented in the assembly.

"Two ballots were cast each day in the conclave, one in the forenoon and another in the afternoon. The votes for Cardinal Sarto steadily increased from the first to the seventh ballot, on which he was elected. When the Cardinal observed that the suffrages for him were augmenting, he was visibly disturbed, and in a fervent speech he implored his colleagues not to regard him as a candidate. Contrary to his wishes, the votes for him increased. He then became alarmed, and in a second speech, in most pathetic language, he again besought the Cardinals to forget his name, as he could not accept a burthen too heavy for him to bear.

"It was only after some of the leading Cardinals entreated him to withdraw his opposition that he finally and reluctantly consented to abide by the will of God and accept the sacrifice. Never did a prisoner make greater efforts to escape from his confinement than did Cardinal Sarto to escape from the yoke of the Papacy. With his Divine Master he exclaimed: 'Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done!' When his election was officially announced, his florid countenance assumed a deathly pallor, and restoratives were applied to save him from fainting. So little did Cardinal Sarto expect to be the choice of his colleagues that on setting out for

Rome he purchased a return ticket to his home in Venice.

"Pius X. is in his sixty-ninth year. He is of the same age that Leo XIII. had attained when he ascended the Papal chair. He has had a large and varied experience in the sacred ministry. He consecutively filled the offices of assistant priest, of pastor, of Chancellor and Vicar-General. He was elected afterward to the See of Mantua, the home of the illustrious Virgil. He was subsequently promoted to the Patriarchal See of Venice.

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How the Catholic Paper Helps

Hardly anything can be more helpful than the right kind of Catholic weekly paper.

Through it the pastoral letter or timely advice of the Bishop easily reaches priests and people. A single thrilling presentation of God's word by some gifted preacher may, through the Catholic newspaper, carry light and inspiration to the homes not only of his own parish, but also to those of every parish in the diocese, or, as in our case, in a group of neighboring dioceses. Misrepresentations or misconceptions of Catholic doctrine and practice which appear only too often in the daily prints can meet with weekly correction at the hands of men who speak in the name of the Church with a fullness of knowledge and light. This is obviously an advantage of the greatest importance and one which could not be expected from a Catholic paper published in some distant city.

How often has not every priest been asked what Catholics are to think of certain statements, alleged facts, or false principles read in the newspapers, heard from the lecture platform, or urged in conversation by men and women, ignorant or prejudiced it may be, but too influential to be ignored? The priest regrets that his information or exposition in the case is given only to one person. He rightly wishes he could reach all Catholics likely to be perplexed by such utterances and through them all the non-Catholics who honestly seek information from Catholic friends or neighbors. The Catholic newspaper gives him the opportunity of carrying out his wish. The contribution of an occasional article on such practical questions will bring the priest who does it to keep closer watch over such damaging statements and opinions. It would induce him to study matters more carefully and afford him a means for the fruitful use of talents, and attainments which so often lie dormant for want of opportunity. And in its measure the same consideration applies to capable laymen and women.

These are but a few hastily written hints of the many advantages of a local Catholic newspaper. But let us add the paper we hope for must not be of the diseased, flabby or moribund type to which unfortunately some Catholic newspapers belong. To meet with success our paper must be generous in tone, Catholic in heart and spirit, virile in thought, pleasing in style, rich in interesting news, wise and sober in doctrine. It must combine the knowledge, the firmness and above all the prudence and charity of Him whose cause it undertakes to further. The truth, the earnestness and the simplicity of Christ should be its motto.—Rev. M. I. Stritch, in the "New Voice," Omaha.

MGR. MERRY DEL VAL.

(By An Old subscriber.)

When we are, in a sense, acquainted with a distinguished personage, we always feel a keener interest in his rise in life, his actions and his words, than if we have only heard or read of him. We have generally an idea of the most prominent Roman prelates, but we cannot say that we have a special interest in any of them to the same extent and of the same nature as we have in our own immediate ecclesiastical superiors. And this is very natural. Of the names that have figured prominently in Vatican circles of late there are several that are almost household words with us—for example that of Cardinal Rampolla, the great Secretary of State of the late illustrious Pontiff. Still, despite the fact that Cardinal Rampolla has played such a conspicuous part in the diplomatic affairs of the Church, we are almost unable to figure the man to ourselves. We have a vision of a Cardinal, a personage of conspicuous talents and singular prominence; but we do not figure the individual as he appears to those by whom he is surrounded.

It is different in the case of such a prelate as Mgr. Merry del Val. We read of him, we see him, photographed in our mind, seated in his apartments in Rome, conversing with those around him, exactly as we saw him seated in the parlors of the Archbishop's Palace in Montreal and holding converse with those who had gone to pay their respects to the delegate of the Sovereign Pontiff. He seems, in a way, to belong to us; he has been with us; he has knelt in our churches, ascended our altars, walked our streets, chatted with our citizens. In a word, he knows us and we know him; not personally, if you will, but as a people. When, therefore, his name appears on the lists of promotion, when his name is associated with important events that attract the attention of the great world, when his person is connected in our minds with the person of the Holy Father, we have no difficulty in grasping the situation, and there is a peculiar sympathy of feeling that is awakened within us.

These few reflections were suggested to our mind by a short passage in a recent letter of "Innominate." The correspondent tells us how Cardinal Rampolla is of a retiring and exceedingly humble character, and that he has been delighted with the opportunity of withdrawing from the important public office that, through a spirit of duty and obedience, he held so long. He then refers to the fact that during the interval between the death of one Pope and the election of another one, Mgr. Merry del Val was selected to replace in a temporary manner the Secretary of State—until the selection of his successor. After this he gives us to understand that the rather youthful prelate—youthful compared to the importance of his office—was chosen on account of the marked ability that he had displayed in the diplomatic field, both at home and abroad; and also, possibly a little, on account of his cosmopolitan character and his command of various languages. Then turning to the question of Pius X.'s selection of a permanent successor to the former Secretary of State, he says:—

"He would be his own Secretary of State, as Leo XIII. was, until Cardinal Rampolla came into office. So Mgr. Merry del Val retains his place. This Spaniard, son of a Castilian lady and an Irishman, born in London, enjoyed the intimate friendship of Cardinal Rampolla and the love of Leo XIII. He keeps up the policy of both. Once when Leo XIII. had lost an assistant, he summoned Mgr. Merry del Val and said to him: 'I mourn for a friend, but you shall take his place.' Evil tongues in Rome call the new reign a government of novices, but Pius X. will imitate Sixtus V. and will acquire easily the methods of work and the habit of supreme command."

There is nothing exceptionally new in this short passage, yet as it brings out in a clear light the standard occupied by Mgr. Merry del Val at the Vatican, the love for him that the late Pope entertained, the confidence in him that Cardinal Rampolla had, it comes home to us in Canada who knew him in his earlier career and who benefited so much by his too short passage amongst us. At the same time we are thus afforded, in a few words, a very exact picture of the situation in Rome and we can draw from it conclusions more logical than any we could form on reading the heaps of matter that are cast broadcast over the world by the journalists and reviewers who pretend to be wise regarding the Vatican and all connected therewith.

In an article containing "Irish Rosary Magazine Association," the well known some of the weakness in a manner which for doubt. Not alone in every other country men are to be found, the same family, Sheehan describes are have for long years in gross of our race. Let carefully read his app situation. It is as fol

The Catholic Association before the public, it been so well defined, city and usefulness have proved, that it seems fuous to issue a hand with its purpose—and rules. And yet, looking pages, we cannot help the clear and honorable which they express to explain the action of of the Association, will help towards the enlighten the public on this most subject; whilst they putting in so elaborate details, that it is quite founders and helps have up their minds that this is no ephemeral and to appeal to Catholic interests, but a well-constructed federal benefits to the Catholic it would be difficult to forecast.

It may be at once objects of the Association rather than negative rather than defensive shall show later on. But for the historian of the that it sprang from the city of combating the aggressive bigotry of public bodies and institutions governed country. I book served no other purpose to enshrine as historic partiality and bigotry of who have hitherto held in Ireland, it would be useful and suggestive pan except the Penal Laws, such terrible indictment dominant and wealthy classes afford. That Clap Beadroll of Bigotry," w for some future historian, be candid enough to find cause of a great deal of piness and misery of Ireland of its terrible depiction explanation of that fierce that seems to be ever sm the hearts of the Irish people. If the same historian can place side by side with the pitiful and apologies of the ascendancy, he will find a tion of that deep distrust ways keeping asunder class—and creed from creel land. The same methods a duce similar results. Inj ways begets hatred and an and it is pitiful, because tical, to hear leaders of pi ion in Ireland bewailing union and lack of friendly tion amongst the classes t form this Commonwealth they carry on—under one another—the same policy t been the bane of Ireland hundred years; and which e will be as disastrous to the ascendancy as to the classes seeking to keep in perman dishonorable subjection. highly intelligent and capation of the community, rep also the majority, should temptuously relegated to tion of mere laborers, "he wood and drawers of water class intellectually inferior, dition of affairs that no pe spirit would tolerate. A tient, or a more imperfectly plined people, would not have such disabilities so long meekly.

One good, however, has namely—the establishment of a central organization for the pur redressing those grievance equalizing better the conditi life in this country. We say "ising" advisedly, for the Ass is emphatic in declaring that not aggressive in any sense word. It does not seek to