

Mass in the Penal Days

*Extract from Sermon delivered by His Grace, Archbishop Glennon,
of St. Louis, in St. Patrick's Church, Montreal,
on September 10th, 1910, during the
Eucharistic Congress*

"IT is not inopportune that in this Eucharistic Congress, this litany' of nations in the praise of their King, that I should speak a word, that I should strike a chord, though it be in a minor key, for the nation whose apostle is patron of this sacred edifice, and whose exiled sons have made possible its building. I would pass by the days of the schoolmen, and come to those latter days, namely the penal times in Ireland, the long weary years when the Catholic Church was persecuted, when a price was set on every 'Mass priest', when the churches were alienated, desecrated, burned; and the entire country pillaged and its people driven to the mountains or into the sea. And this dread visitation, unlike the storm that passes, unlike the plague that eats its lethal way, not for a season, but for over three hundred years, brooded over the land, its darkness lighted only by the ascending