

Written for CATHOLIC RECORD. CATHOLICS OF SCOTLAND.

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The principles of French politics were spreading at this time in Scotland. In France what they called a constitutional government was exercising despotism over public opinion. Associations or clubs for the diffusion of revolutionary opinions began to make themselves felt at Edinburgh. In November they published certain resolutions. To their just demands for Government reform they, with the want of tact and prudence incident to nearly every popular movement, united in an absurd protest against one man's having the right to the obedience of another, together with other revolutionary tenets of the French school. It was said that two thirds of the citizens of the capital favored those opinions. Two papers were published weekly as their organs. The streets echoed at night with cries of "No King! No aristocrats!" Some of the most audacious partisans attempted to fraternize with the soldiers in the castle, treating them to drink, and promising every man among them 1s. 6d. a day, if he would join the club. Information of these reckless proceedings led to the apprehension and imprisonment of the offenders in the tolbooth or jail of Edinburgh, a prison which the great novelty of its immortality under its romantic name of "The Heart of Mid Lothian." On the same day the tree of liberty was planted at the market cross of Dundee. A gentleman of fervent loyalty, who pulled it down, had his windows broken and his manufactory entirely demolished. The magistrates were driven from the town, and the assistance of the dragoons was necessary to restore order. It is not a little noticeable that the injustice suffered by the British Catholics was not prominently forward by all these revolutionary clubs as a grievous wrong, calling for sympathy and redress. As in man's constitution, so in that of a nation, a weak point is certainly detected in a crisis of general infirmity.

To the great regret of the Catholic people the health of Bishop Geddes was now declining rapidly. His toilsome journey to Orkney had injured him, and the fatigue incident to his negotiations at Paris gave a second shock to his constitution. Rheumatism now seized on his limbs and he could neither walk nor travel on horseback. The most eminent physicians of the time, Doctors Gregory and Spens, were consulted. They prescribed, among other things, rest; and he retired to Leith, which was not then the busy seaport it has since become. He could only write with difficulty and slowly. For the most part he employed an amanuensis; and the Rev. Paul McCann, before his appointment to the Roman agency, generally performed this office. Neither rest nor medicine appeared to do any good; and a form of paralysis began to be felt. His illness caused great concern to Bishop Hay; and he often and feebly expressed it.

The bishops conceived the idea of publishing a pastoral letter on the subject of the sedition spirit that was showing itself in the country; and, indeed, notwithstanding Lord Adam Gordon, the commander in chief, had requested Bishop Geddes to speak on the subject to his people in church. The proposal gave rise to some discussion. There was even doubt in the bishop's mind whether the pastoral should be published at all. The Lord Advocate and the agent for the crown were consulted. These gentlemen appeared to fear lest its publication might be attended with some danger, and might excite ill-will against Catholics, in the agitated state of the public mind. Bishop Geddes, to whom Bishop Hay left the decision on the matter, thought himself that such a result was not improbable; and, therefore, the publication of the pastoral was abandoned. The proposal to issue a pastoral letter in the cause of order, together with the discussions and consultations to which it led, failed not to increase the favor with which the bishops were looked upon by the men in power. A circumstance may here be mentioned which shows how popular the British were at Rome. Mr. Peter McLachlan, a Scotch student at Rome, wrote to Bishop Hay under date of 14th January, 1793, that Prince Ernest Augustus, the king's son, had been in Rome about two months and intended to stay till the end of April. He came one day to the academy of languages at Propaganda, where he was treated with as much respect and distinction as they could have shown to the Pope himself, the hall being most superbly hung with rich tapestry and a throne erected for him in the middle. On leaving Propaganda he received a popular ovation. As soon as he was recognized the people flocked around him and began to cry out "Viva il Re e la famiglia Reale d'Inghilterra! Viva l'Inghilterra! Viva il Papa di Inghilterra!" and could, by no means, be prevailed on to depart until they had kissed his hand, as was the custom in Italy. Such was the reputation England had gained by reason of the decent and becoming behaviour of the English who resorted to Rome in vast numbers.

Mr. Thomson, the agent of the mission at Rome, having died, it became necessary to appoint a successor. It was difficult to part with any of the priests, who were so few in number; and yet so much depended on the Roman Agency, that some one must be spared. The business of the mission must be attended to, and particularly that which regarded the Scotch college. Mr. Smith, the agent of the English clergy, was requested to act in the meantime. And now came a rumour that a representative of the Holy See was on his way to London in order to solicit the aid of England against the French. Bishop Hay, on hearing this news, expressed not his surprise, but rather that he was not surprised. "An ambassador of your kind from Hillion (the city of the seven hills) to London is, indeed, an extraordinary phenomenon! But how can we be surprised at anything in this age of wonders?" Surprised or

not surprised, the bishop was resolved to avail himself of the circumstance for a good purpose. If the mission from Rome succeeded Mr. Henry Dundas, the friend of the bishops, would, perhaps, request of the Holy Father as a favor to his British allies the appointment of a national president to the Scotch college. Strong reasons might be urged in support of the minister's interference.

After some consultation with Bishop Chisholm the Rev. Paul Macpherson was appointed to the Roman agency. There was only one objection, his great usefulness as Procurator of the mission. He was himself much inclined to the appointment. He had for some time considered that it would be his greatest happiness to live at Rome. He now had his wish; and it came in a way that could not but be pleasing to him.

The Scotch college at Douai, as had been feared for some time, had now reached the "beginning of the end." It was narrowly watched, and the public scales placed on its property. It was left to Mr. Farquarson, who possessed the full confidence of the bishops, to do the best that could be done in the circumstances. His chief care was to send home the students; and it was arranged that they should travel under the charge of Mr. Alexander Paterson. It was expected that some of them should study at Valladolid and others at home. One of them, Mr. Andrew Scott, who had just commenced the study of divinity, was assigned as a companion to Mr. Andrew Carruthers at Seulan. The students reached London in safety. Thence they took ship for Berwick, and were at Edinburgh by the middle of April. The names of some of the students for the Lothians will be long remembered in that country. They are Andrew Scott, afterwards bishop, William McDonald, William Wallace, James Paterson, William Smith, and Alexander Badenoch.

The time was now come when the increasing illness of Bishop Geddes required that he should have complete exemption from care and labor. This he could not enjoy at Edinburgh. Referring to Leith was only like taking an airing next door. His cares, if not all the fatigue of duty, followed him. It was finally resolved, after much deliberation, that he should reside at Seulan, Bishop Hay taking his place at Edinburgh. His presence at the seminary would be useful without requiring any exertion on his part. Mr. Andrew Carruthers being charged with the harder duties. He would not, however, be altogether idle, as he hoped, with the aid of an amanuensis, to do something towards forwarding his proposed work, the History of the Scotch Missions, which he had long had much at heart. The importance of such a history was becoming greater every day, and at no time was it more important than at that in which he lived. The perfect quiet of Seulan and its pure mountain air must have been highly favorable to the invalid. But his illness was beyond remedy. So thought Bishop Hay, an excellent judge. The bishop knew to whom he was writing, when he said, in a letter to the patient, "With regard to my opinion about your health, I always considered your case to be of the paralytic kind, at least since the full accounts you gave me of it, I took at our last Gibson meeting, and I honestly own to you, my most dear sir, with that candor which I owe to you as a real friend, that I have no great expectations of a thorough recovery, at least of speedy one, whatever the doctors may say. I have known people even of a considerable age who, after a sudden and even severe fit of palsy, have recovered beyond expectation, but when it begins in a manner insensibly, as yours did, and advances almost by imperceptible degrees, to the length you have come, I own I see little ground to expect what we so earnestly wish for."

Bishop Geddes, with the hope of seeing something done to remove preparing a history of the Scotch mission, proposed to carry with him to Seulan a collection of old letters that were in his possession, out of which he would extract at his leisure whatever information they might contain relating to the mission. The more he gave his attention to this subject the more important it appeared to him. A knowledge of mission history he was confident, would have prevented many disputes. Bishop Hay had no objection to this study except on account of its demand on his strength, the little application it required being beyond his powers and contrary to what his physicians advised.

Having appointed Mr. Paterson, "a very sensible and well principled young man" (and afterwards so good a bishop), to the mission of Glenlivet Bishop Hay, on the 8th of June, 1793, bade adieu once more to his favorite retreat at Seulan. He named Mr. James Sharp as his assistant in the mission duty of Edinburgh. He himself undertook to fill the office of Procurator at least for a year. The bishop of the Highland district being detained at home by illness the two bishops of the Lowlands only attended the annual meeting. In their usual letter to Rome they had the satisfaction to inform Cardinal Antonelli and Propaganda of the repeal of the penal laws. They also communicated directly this acceptable intelligence to the Holy Father, and besought him at the same time to use his authority in reforming the condition of the Scotch college at Rome. The first important act of Bishop Hay at Edinburgh on his return from Seulan and the last of his official coadjutor was to take and subscribe the oath of allegiance required by the recent Relief Bill. Both bishops appeared before the sheriff substitute of Mid Lothian, swore and subscribed as required.

The invaluable work of bishop Geddes at the capital was now at an end. His amiability and various accomplishments, his distinguished literary merit and eminent virtue had won for him many friends in every religious denomination. He beheld in his time that extraordinary revolution in public feeling which resulted in the unanimous passing of the Relief Bill; and this revolution was due in great measure to his personal influence. Men of the highest reputation, lawyers, judges, men of

letters, learned to respect his religion in respecting the man who professed it, and whom they recognized as their equal in intellectual power and acquirement, whilst they found him genial as he was gifted. The mind of Bishop Hay, though possibly more vigorous and profound, was not so versatile; and he was certainly not adapted, although possessed of many accomplishments, to shine in general society. People revered him, nevertheless; but they loved the coadjutor, Catholics, both clergy and laity, were irresistibly under the influence of like feelings. How sorrowful, then, must not have been the parting with such a bishop, and for such a cause!

TO BE CONTINUED.

"EDITORS BACK STAIRS."

THE INTERESTING VIEWS OF THE LATE DR. J. G. HOLLAND.

The columns of the newspapers appear to be flooded with proprietary medicine advertisements. As we cast our eye over them, it brings to mind an article that was published by the late Dr. Holland in Scribner's Monthly. He says: "Nevertheless, it is a fact that many of the best proprietary medicines of the day were more successful than many physicians, and most of them, it should be remembered, were as if discovered or used in actual medical practice. When, however, any shrewd person, knowing their virtues, and foreseeing their popularity, secures and advertises them, then, in the opinion of the bigoted, all virtues went out of them." Is not this absurd?

This great man appreciated the real merits of popular remedies, and the absurdity of those that derided them because public attention was called to the article and the evidence of their cures.

If an ulcer is found upon one's arm, and is cured by some dear old grandmother, outside of the code, it will be pronounced by the medical profession an ulcer of little importance. But if treated under the code, causing sleepless nights for a month, with the scientific treatment, viz., plasters, washes, dosing with morphia, arsenic, and other vile substances, given to prevent blood poisoning or desam pain, and yet the ulcer becomes malignant, and amputation is made necessary at last, to save life, yet all done according to the "laws" of the medical code, this is much more gratifying to the medical profession, and adds more dignity to that distinguished order than to be cured by the dear old grandmother's remedy.

One of the most perplexing things of the day is the popularity of certain remedies, especially Warner's Safe Cure, which we find for sale everywhere. The physician of the highest standing is ready to concede its merits and sustain the theories the proprietors have made that it, that it benefits in most of the ailments of the human system because it assists in putting the kidneys in proper condition, thereby aiding in throwing off the impurities of the blood, whilst others with less honesty and experience deride, and are willing to see their patient die scientifically, and according to the code, rather than have him cured by this great remedy.

The physician comes boldly before the people with his merits, and proclaims them from door to door and is in our opinion much more honorably than the physician who, perchance, may secure a patient from some catastrophe, and is permitted to set a bone of an arm or finger, which he does with great dignity, yet very soon after takes the liberty to climb the editor's back stairs at 2 o'clock in the morning to have it announced in the morning paper that "Dr. So and so was in attendance," thus securing for his benefit a beautiful and free advertisement.

We shall leave it to our readers to say which is the wiser and more honorable.

NEW BOOKS.

Messrs. Berzger Bros., 36 and 38 Barclay street, New York, have issued a very useful work entitled "The First Communion's Manual," an entirely new compilation of prayers and devotions for children about to make their first communion. It is the only book of its kind in English, and we believe it was greatly needed. It is made in two sizes, one with a red line, the other without, and in a variety of bindings.

The same firm have also published a very instructive volume entitled "The Glorious Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ," short meditations from Eusebius to the Ascension, by Rev. R. D. Clarke, S. J. Marquette, 20 cents; per hundred, \$13.50.

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