

OUR CURBSTONE OBSERVER

On Funny Stories

So frequently has it happened to me that I was made almost ill, or to say the least, unpleasantly uneasy, when I have heard the professional "funny story man" giving signs that he was about to afflict us with a "chestnut," that I was grateful to the Rev. A. B. O'Neill, C.S.C., when I read his "hints for those who persist in serving up mildewed remains of long-deceased witticisms."

persists in serving up the mildewed remains of long-deceased witticisms is to greet the conclusion of his narrative with a chorus of groans instead of a peal of laughter.

TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING. — "To be dominated by the anecdote or story-telling habit is to be afflicted with too much of a good thing. 'No sane person,' says Champ Clark, 'would elect to be continually cooped up with another who is witty or humorous on all occasions any more than he would desire to dwell in a land of perpetual day; but sunshine is a very good thing nevertheless.' We may very well admit, with Charles Lamb, that 'a laugh is worth a hundred groans in any market,' without committing ourselves to the sentiment that the normal expression of the human countenance, even during hours of relaxation and pleasure, should be the perpetual grinning of the proverbial Cheshire cat. To have in one's memory a goodly store of brilliant epigrams, happy illustrations, mirth-provoking jests, ludicrous bulls, pointed repartees, humorous tales and witty anecdotes is to be provided with ammunition that is safe to come into legitimate play often enough on the platform, in the club room, in the smoking car, or the home circle; but it is a mistake to be continually exploding one's verbal squibs with the reckless profusion of the Yankee small boy setting off unlimited fire-crackers on the Fourth of July."

A CAUSTIC COMMENT. — "Few bits of recorded criticism are so likely to describe appropriately the average book or pamphlet, play or poem, magazine essay, newspaper sketch or literary what-not of the day as the old-time reviewer's caustic comment on a volume now forgotten: 'It contains some good things and some new things; but the good things are not new, and the new things are not good.' It may be well at the very outset of this article to forestall equally censorious comments on the following paragraphs by frankly disclaiming for them any particular originality or brilliancy. It is encouraging in this connection, however, to remember Emerson's dictum that 'the originals themselves are not original,' or to recall Holmes' statement that 'a thought is often original though you have uttered it a hundred times.'"

ABSENCE OF TACT. — "This saying of the autocrat is possibly orthodox enough if restricted to thoughts, but it is certainly heterodox when applied to anecdotes. The story that you have told a hundred times is unmistakably trite so far as you are concerned, and in all probability is thoroughly stale to your auditors as well. It is a risky experiment to take it for granted that even an anecdote comparatively new to ourselves has not been heard by the majority of the company to whom we narrate it; and to monopolize the attention of a social gathering by our long drawn-out relation of stories which reiterated repetitions have made as common-places as remarks upon the weather is to display unpardonable want of tact. There is nothing surer however, than that just such absence of tact will often be shown by the man who has allowed himself to become a slave to the anecdote habit. Without any preliminary inquiry as to whether or not his hearers are already acquainted with the story, he has in mind, he proceeds to inflict it upon them with far less regard for any entertainment they may derive from his narrative than for his own delight in hearing himself talk. The need of the "chestnut bell" has unfortunately survived its use, and in its absence the only adequate punishment for the inveterate raconteur who

A GRAVE DANGER. — "The man who has achieved a reputation as a good story-teller is very apt to have what our French friends call the 'defects of his qualities.' He grows prone, with the lapse of time and the strengthening of his habit, to resent competition in his particular role. To take his turn with the rest of the company at telling a story becomes a sacrifice beyond his strength. He must hold the floor for an indefinite period, the applause that greets one anecdote setting him off forthwith upon another, and the possibly perfunctory laughter called forth by this second serving merely as an excuse to begin a third. He forgets, in a word, one of the characteristics which, according to Newman, denotes the true gentleman—he is seldom prominent in conversation and never wearisome." Now, be it ever so brilliant, monologue inevitably becomes wearisome, especially when the speaker's auditors are anxious to substitute dialogue therefor."

A GOOD ANECDOTE. — "Another danger into which the professional anecdotist is apt to fall is the tendency occasionally to violate the rules of reverence, decorum, and even common decency. The desire to raise a laugh becomes, when habitually indulged, a species of mania that will attempt to satisfy itself even at the risks which make the judicious griever. In this connection let there be retold, here, one good thing that is not new. At a military dinner in the early '70's a certain major noted for the 'broadness,' that is, the nastiness of his stories, began one with his usual formula: 'Well, as there are no ladies present—' 'No,' interrupted General Grant, 'but there are gentlemen.'

Catholic Physicians Organize

The Catholic Columbian, Columbus, Ohio, says: Recently three hundred Catholic physicians from all parts of Europe made a pilgrimage to Rome, where they were received in audience by Pope Pius X., afterward holding a congress for the discussion of matters relating to their calling, as Catholic physicians. One important outcome of the Congress is the movement there set on foot to form, in this country a National Catholic Medical Society, on the plan of those already existing in France, Spain, Holland and Italy. Many prominent Catholic physicians in this country favor the plan, and will do all that they can to co-operate in the organization. The idea of the organization is this: The Catholic doctors, with the ob-

ject of establishing a fraternal union among themselves and renewing the ancient Christian traditions, decided to found a society in each country under the protection of the holy doctors, St. Luke, St. Cosmas and St. Damian. The objects of the society are (a) the application of the Christian virtues and professional charity in the practice of medicine, and (b) the study of medical questions with special attention to those regarding faith, moral and deontology. They declare that in this they submit to the decisions of ecclesiastical authority. Societies will avoid all political questions. The societies founded in the different countries are to be independent in their different functions, but in order to create among them a fraternal bond of union they may be kept in communication with one another through their respective presidents. They will aim at holding general

reunions, the presidency of which will be given the presidents of each society in turn. The general reunions will take place in Rome, the centre of Christendom. The doctors of Rome will be charged to correspond with the different societies and to give them all the necessary information on such matters as may call for explanation. Similar organizations are to be established in Ireland, England, Scotland and Australia.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS AND A DEATH CLAIM

Because he was a member of St. John's Lodge No. 3 A. F. and A. M. the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus has refused to pay the \$1000 death benefit due the estate of the late Patrick Coghlin, former Mayor, and one of the most prominent Irish-Americans in Bridgeport, Conn.

The refusal is based on the allegation that as Mr. Coghlin was affiliated with a Masonic body, he could not be a member of the Knights of Columbus, although at the time of his death about two months ago he was in good financial standing in that organization and carried insurance in it. The action taken by the supreme body is embodied in the following vote:

"Voted that the claim of the late Patrick Coghlin be rejected on the ground that he was not a member of the order. That the officers and members of the subordinate councils of this order in Bridgeport who are responsible for allowing Patrick Coghlin to exercise the privilege of membership after knowledge of his affiliation with Masonry, be censured, and that steps be taken to duly punish the same; that a committee of the board visit Bridgeport with a view of ascertaining who were responsible for allowing Patrick Coghlin to exercise the privilege of membership after such knowledge was had."

The Knights of Columbus is a strictly Catholic order. One of the requirements of membership in it is that the member shall be in good standing in the Church, a condition which, the Knights say, could not exist while a membership was retained in any Masonic body. That Mr. Coghlin was a member of St. John's Lodge at the time he was admitted to the local council of the Knights of Columbus, however, it is said, was unknown to the members of the Council. His estate will contest the stand taken by the Knights of Columbus, and a suit is to be instituted against the order to recover the death benefit due. The matter will be carried to the highest courts, if necessary.—Pittsburg Observer.

NOTES FROM GRANBY.

(By An Occasional Correspondent.)

Perfect weather, with a June temperature, and a large gathering of all denominations, made Sunday, the 8th instant, a day long to be remembered by the citizens of Granby, and especially by the Catholic population. The event being the laying of the corner stone of the new Catholic Church. Besides the Church services there was a civic celebration under the auspices of the different Catholic societies, headed by the Granby brass band, which together with their magnificent banners, and regalia glittering in the sunshine, with Mother Earth's contribution of green, gave an effect which the most fastidious artist could well feast on. The Mayor and Councillors followed in a body. On reaching the Church the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament took place, after which the Rev. Father Barre ascended the pulpit and gave descriptive sermons in French and English, as to the blessing of different objects, etc., to the service of God, in the Church. The impressive ceremony of blessing the corner-stone was then proceeded with. Rev. F. X. Bernard, Vicar-General of St. Hyacinthe, officiating, assisted by the clergy of the surrounding parishes. The service being ended, Mayor Miner, on the invitation of Rev. Father Gill, stepped to the front of the platform and briefly addressed the assemblage. He said the large company which he saw before him was an indication of the great progress which had been made in the Catholic parish of Granby, and that day marked an epoch in its history and the lives of the Catholic population, for the work their Church would do in elevating

all. He brought greetings of good fellowship from all the Protestant churches. During the past sixty years he had been associated with nearly every movement in Granby of a political, religious or social nature. He remembered the start of all the churches here, and had watched their growth with impartial interest. During that time their successive Cures had all been personal friends of his. He recalled the late Father McAuley in a glowing tribute to his memory as one of the best friends he ever had, and whom he believed had done more than any other man to help broaden his (the speaker's) views. Intercourse with Father Gill was such that made him universally loved and respected by both Catholics and Protestants. They as Protestants were not jealous of the Catholic Church. They were all too broad, and trying to be too broad for this, and showed their feelings in their daily life. Concluding, he wished them continued success, and resumed his seat amid applause.

I have not an estimate of the contributions which followed, but I have every reason to believe that they were large and will materially help in the construction of the beautiful new edifice.

We sympathize with our respected townsman, Mr. James Caroline, in the loss of his little daughter, Mary, from typhoid pneumonia.

Miss E. Harris, of West Sheffield, is visiting among her old friends in Granby, previous to going West to reside.

Bishop Phelan's Jubilee

The Rt. Rev. Richard Phelan, D.D. the venerable Bishop of Pittsburg, Pa., had the golden jubilee of his priesthood on May 4, and his Coadjutor, Bishop Canevin, his priests and people made the celebration one to be long remembered.

Archbishop Ryan, of Philadelphia, celebrated the Pontifical High Mass in the Church of the Epiphany, in presence of the jubilarian, and His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons, and many Bishops. Bishop Hoban, of Scranton, preached. Bishop Phelan was not able to attend the dinner, but he was present at the evening meeting at Carnegie Hall, attended by his brother, the Very Rev. Canon Phelan.

Cardinal Gibbons made a brief address of affectionate congratulation, in the course of which he said:

"The question may be asked: Why praise a man before he is dead? Our Blessed Lord Himself bestowed eulogy upon John the Baptist and Nathaniel while they were still in the flesh. Of Nathaniel He said: 'Behold an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile.' If we wait till Bishop Phelan's death to do honor unto him it is very likely that many of us will not be here at the time. If I were asked to what to ascribe the longevity of your Bishop I would answer—a good conscience, regularity of life, tranquility of mind, the result of the consolation derived from a united clergy and united people. A united clergy, a united laity, and a Bishop enjoying the love and confidence of all form a triple alliance stronger than the triple alliance of Germany, Austria and Italy, for that alliance is a union of flesh, your alliance is a union of faith, hope and charity."

FATHER DE COSTA.

Dr. Benjamin F. De Costa, many years rector of the Protestant Episcopal Church of St. John the Evangelist, in New York City, and who was recently ordained priest of the Catholic Church in Rome, has returned to America. It will be remembered that Father De Costa's health had been broken down, and at one time it was feared he would not live to be ordained. However, he succeeded in attaining the goal of his ambition. After his ordination he was obliged to leave Rome for a dryer and more healthy climate. He was then supposed to be dying. On Tuesday last he reached New York, on the Prinz Adelbert, from Italy. His only remark on being met by friends was: "I am very glad to get home." He had, at one time, given up all idea of again seeing America. This wish has also been granted, and we are glad to say that he is recovering very well from his illness.

Man often shows the hard side of his disposition to mark more strongly the generous shades.

LORD CHARLES RUSSELL.

Few Irishmen have risen to greater distinction than the late Lord Russell. Anything connected with his life is of the deepest interest. Not long since His Honor Judge McHugh, of Windsor, Ontario, delivered a most instructive lecture, in St. Mary's Hall, East London, Ont., on Lord Charles Russell Judge McHugh is, himself, a fine sample of the successful Irish Catholic, who has worked himself up to the top of the ladder. The story told of Lord Russell's life, in the broad field of the Empire, was not unlike, in many phases, that which might be told of Judge McHugh in the more restricted field of colonial life. We take the report of the lecture as given in the press, and we are sure it will interest our readers:

Charles Russell was born in Newry, Ireland, on 10th November, 1832. His father, Arthur Russell, was a man of gentle disposition, charitable, religious and affectionate; whilst his mother, Margaret Mullen, was a woman of strong character who exercised a strict supervision over the religious training of her children. Her son Charles no doubt inherited from his mother many remarkable qualities which brought him success in life. Many men who afterwards became famous were born not far from the subject of this sketch. Chief among these mentioned were Thos. O'Hagan, Hugh Cairns, Lord Dufferin, Thos. D'Arcy McGee and Gavin Duffy. Charles Russell's early days were spent in Killowen, his earliest education being entrusted to a governess. He afterwards went to school at Belfast, and in 1848 he attended St. Vincent's College, Dublin. At the age of seventeen he began to study law. When he was nineteen years of age he carried off the highest prize for the best essay on "The Age in Which We Live." In 1854 he entered upon the duties of his profession. A delightful pen picture by the novelist, Rosa Mulholland, of Charles Russell at this period was here read by the lecturer. While practicing his profession in Belfast, Charles Russell also prosecuted his studies in Trinity College. While he never personally attended the course in Trinity, in 1858 he passed successfully the College examination and was called to the bar. From the first he was self-reliant, and confident of success.

In this same year he married Ella Mulholland, the daughter of Dr. Mulholland and the sister of Rosa Mulholland. As time went on Russell's commanding genius inspired success and brought him clients from all conditions and classes. He was retained as counsel in some of the most important criminal cases of his day. Although not a born orator, he brought to his profession, aptitude, earnestness, clearness, and a resolute will as also a strong personality. He was likewise unexcelled in the art of cross-examination. A distinguished English judge once said of him: "Russell is the greatest advocate of his age." Carlyle defines genius as "an infinite capacity for taking pains." Much of Russell's success is due to the fact that he was methodical, concise, incisive and extremely earnest at all times. In 1872 he was made a Q.C. In England the bestowal of this honor rests with the Lord Chancellor, and is never given except on the highest merit. Amongst other celebrated cases Russell defended Labouchere, Mrs. Maybrick and O'Donnell. His greatest professional triumph was, however, the vindication of Parnell before the Parnell Commission. He was successful in this as in everything else, and he proved that Parnell was innocent of all complicity in the infamous charges instigated by the London Times, in 1882 in a series of articles entitled "Parnellism and Crime." So completely did he frustrate the plot against Parnell and the Home Rule party that Pigot, the forger of the notorious letters in question, was obliged to fly from England to France, and to escape the penalty of his infamy, he committed suicide. Russell's oration on this occasion was a masterpiece of eloquence worthy of a Curran or an O'Connell. He also proved to the satisfaction of all that such acts of criminality were made possible—in fact were directly traceable to the misgovernment of Ireland. This misgovernment, he said, was a cloud which had long rested on the history of the noble Irish race—and one which has dimmed the glory of the mighty British Empire. Russell's address on this occasion created a profound impression, so much so that Lord Rosebery, the presiding judge,

offered him his hearty felicitations. His last case was one of international importance and involved the interests of Canada. The United States contended that they alone had the right to all the seals in the Behring Sea; while Great Britain held that Behring Sea was open to the vessels of the world. The contention of Great Britain was triumphant owing to the legal diplomacy and tact of Lord Russell, her counsel. Russell was expeditious, painstaking and popular, and his integrity was undeterred by popular clamor. He paid two visits to the United States. On the second occasion, after his elevation to the bench, he accepted an invitation to deliver an address before the Bar Association which met at Saratoga. In the dispute between Great Britain and the United States as to the boundary line between Venezuela and British Guiana, Lord Russell was chosen on behalf of Great Britain as arbitrator. His eminent services to the Empire on that occasion were so much appreciated that they were gratefully acknowledged in the English Parliament. In 1866 he was made Attorney-General, being the first Catholic to fill that office since the Restoration, and during the Gladstone Administration he was created Lord Chief Justice of England.

Russell's domestic relations also were very happy. He was kind and affectionate to his children, joined in their sports and sympathized in their ambitions. The happiness of his wife and children was his chief care. Beneath a cold exterior he had a warm heart. He was particularly kind to the unfortunate, especially, to neglected children.

Lord Russell belonged to a deeply religious family. His three sisters entered the religious life, and his only brother, Matthew Russell, became a distinguished member of the Jesuit order in Dublin. Lord Russell's daughter also entered the religious life. He himself was at all times a sincere and practical Catholic. Man of the world as he was, he was ever remarkable for his purity of language and he had an abhorrence for loose conversation. His career demonstrates the fact that a man can achieve the highest distinction in this life without infringing upon the moral and religious obligations which the divine law imposes upon mankind.

The fatal illness came upon him without premonition, while he was in the full possession of all his faculties. While attending the assizes in Wales, he returned home slightly indisposed. On consultation it was deemed advisable for him to submit to an operation; from the effects of which he, however, never rallied. Repeating until the last moment the prayers which he had learned at his mother's knee, and fortified with the last Sacraments, he breathed forth his soul to God on the 10th August 1900, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. From the beginning of his career in Court the flight of time but marked his steady advancement until by his transcendent genius he became the most hated legal personage of his age. His career is truly an object lesson to the laymen of this country, attaining as he did the very highest position of trust without sacrificing a single principle. He has pointed out the path by which others may ascend to the same height. His eminent public services are unparalleled. His unswerving devotion to duty is well worthy of our imitation. He was also remarkable for his loyalty to the best interests of the Empire. His life should prove an inspiration and an incentive to every man who values justice, honor and truth.

A Philippino Judge.

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines Islands is a native. It is claimed that "his American associates on the bench regard him as one of the greatest and best met." The very pertinent question equipped lawyers that they have ever now arises as to who educated such a man. It is generally forgotten that the Filipinos had universities in their country much longer than America. This idea of considering all people outside the United States, as barbarians, is not unlike the old Roman standard of civilization. All were barbarians who were outside the pale of Rome's dominion; yet Rome has long since vanished and those very barbarians have been the ancestors of the most intelligent and learned people on earth.

In our missions we had to devote one of the solemn exposition of the Church as often as they are able in adoration Saturday before this to take place in Dunceastical student Jerry, who was spending in the town, with occupied with the altars, the high altars and flowers to know if the six straight, came to where I was busily ed me to go and accompanied him at o della, and finding they were necessary, I had hind the reded, rem front of the altar. I pushed one of the candles over its came thundering down knocking me backward the altar steps, and ous wound on my forehead by an ugly s insensible for a short bleeding profusely. sent for who dressed I was able to return sional after an hour's fellow who was the of the accident, when had done, then and that he would end the place if he were accept he did not succeed in instead of returning applied for admission and in the course of priest among the Mi of Mary Immaculate.

Some conversions in this Catholic town of our missions their readers to a notable recorded in my essay 'Conversions.' As a seek to make many of those who were out of Church; we felt that tion was to evangelize to preach the Gospel sheep of the House household of Faith. mission is generally and too hurried to be engaged in it to instruction to such a ter the truth. But to introduce such priests of the local our departure the little kindled into a bright burning flame. I do remarks to the admiral missions to non are at the present d vogue, and which are good especially in of America. It will stood that these non sions are not preach are not needed in Ca

An amusing incident during our first visit I was deputed to give instruction to the ch except Sunday, at this time the other taking a slight lunc would walk in the outside the Church, Vespers and Comps when Father G— to and fro, reciting respectfully dressed seated herself on flat stones, with the of attracting his at rocking herself from the hood of her clo over her head, and dibly. When he had said: "What is the woma? You seem troubled." She lo and replied: "Oh! ther, what'll I do mitted a sin that I great God in Heave for it!" "O don't Father G—" "But did, and perhaps I "Well, then, Father whole truth. I liv miles from Dungan of the Commeraghs farm there, and I great many cocks was! Very proud of me! So one morn when the girl who the cows came back rogue of a fox had hen house and her tiful cocks and her cock that was no curred all his nam ration to the end into Dunganvan to- keting, and when t said I would do se poor soul, for I k tal sin, and I also