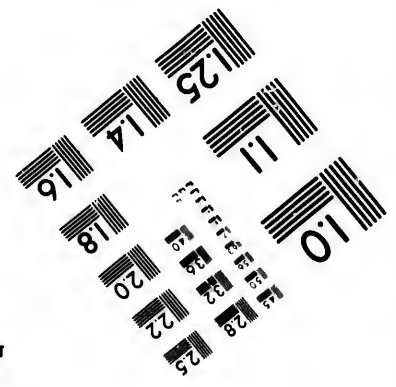
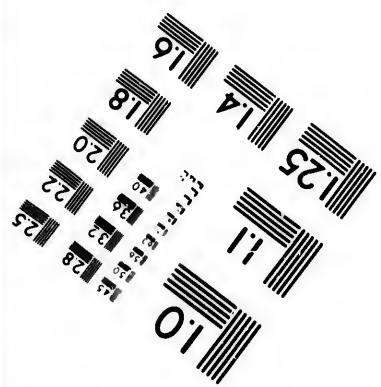
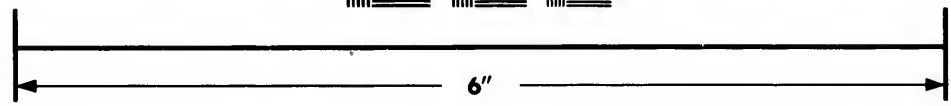
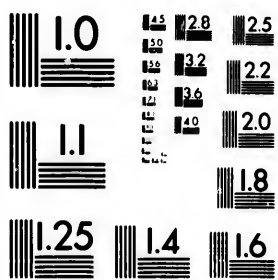


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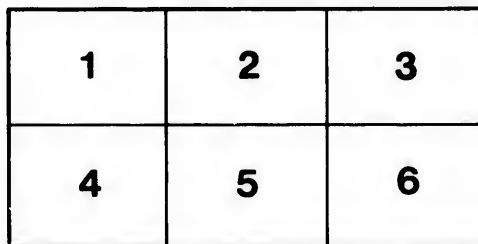
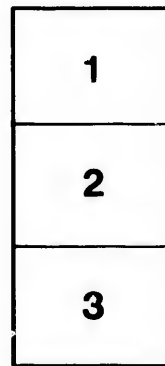
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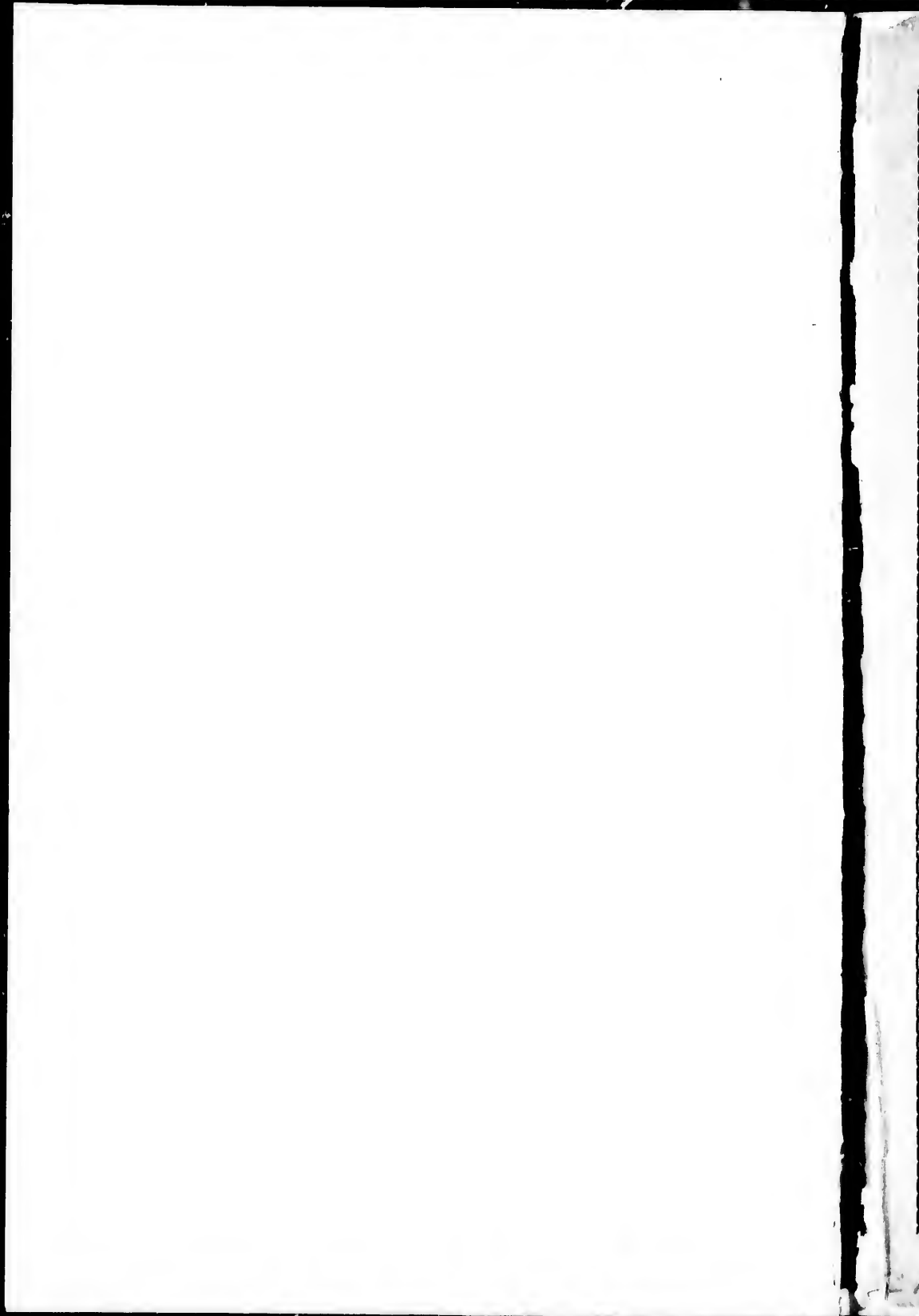
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OF

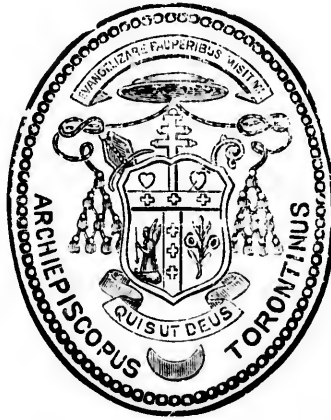
His Grace the Archbishop of Toronto,

ON THE

CATHOLIC INSTITUTIONS

AT

NIAGARA \* FALLS.



*See No. 365-09*

This Contains an Interesting Account of Niagara Falls.

Ontario, Canada.



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PASTORAL LETTER  
OF  
HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF TORONTO,  
ON THE  
CATHOLIC INSTITUTIONS AT NIAGARA FALLS.

JOHN JOSEPH LYNDEN, by the Command of God and the Appointment of the Holy See, Archbishop of Toronto, Assistant at the Pontifical Throne, &c.

*To the Venerable Clergy, Religious, and all the Faithful of Our Diocese, Salvation and Peace, &c. Our Lord.*

The Cataract of Niagara early attracts thousands of lovers of sublimity and grandeur. They come to wonder, but few dare to pass. The people have been from childhood an object of the greatest interest. A portion of their lives was spent — we were awe-struck with its beauty, and we felt that we could never find there. The vision of it haunted us through life. The providence of God, in length conducted us to it, and abundantly provided the means of our admiring it at the Seminary of Our Lady of Angels in the town of Buffalo, N. Y. For our being appointed by the Holy See Bishop of Toronto, it was our duty to come on the Canada Side of Niagara Falls a large tract of land on which several religious establishments, where God would be worshipped with a perfect homage of sacrifice and praise, and where the Catholic Church would be fittingly represented.



It was at the commencement of the American civil war. Our heart was moved with sorrow at the loss of many lives and the prospect of so many souls going before God in judgment, some, it is to be feared, but ill prepared. The beautiful rainbow that spanned the Cataract, the sign of peace between God and the sinner, suggested prayers and hopes to see the war soon ended; and we called the Church "Our Lady of Victories or of Peace." A Convent was soon erected on the grounds, and Nuns of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, called of Loretto, were installed.

This Order had its heroic beginnings in the reigns of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth of England. Ladies of noble birth fled to Bavaria to avoid death or the loss of religious rights in their own country. They formed a Religious Community approved of by Clement XI., re-entered England towards the close of the last century, and subsequently came to Toronto on the invitation of its first Bishop, the venerable and saintly Dr. Power.

These good Nuns, whilst not engaged in imparting a higher education to young ladies who assemble at the Convent from all parts of the country, occupy their time in adoring God and contemplating His overflowing sweetness and bounty in the Most Blessed Sacrament. Their chapel windows overlook the grandest scene in the world, and holy thoughts and prayer arise to heaven as the spray ascends to form clouds that fertilize the earth with refreshing showers. The Convent chapel is dedicated to the Most Blessed Sacrament, in hopes that when the Community will be sufficiently numerous it may keep up a perpetual adoration.

We have for many years searched for a fervent congregation of men to found a Monastery and a church worthy of the place and its destination. Enthusiastic pilgrims of nature's grandeur come here to enjoy its beauty; others, alas, to their remorse. We deemed to have a religious house where those pilgrims would be attracted to adore nature's God in spirit and in truth, and who would there find, in solitude and rest, how great and good God is.

The Fathers of the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the most ancient in the Church and dear to the heart of our Blessed Mother, have commenced this good work. Our Holy Father Pius IX. has been graciously pleased to confer upon the present little church Plenary Indulgences and other favours granted to the most ancient pilgrimages of the old world. The Fathers also propose, when a suitable house is built, to receive Prelates and Clergy of the Church as well as Laity to make retreats; and to provide Priests, worn out in the service of their Divine Master, with a home where they can quietly prepare for eternity.

Missions will be also given in parishes by the Religious at the request of the Bishops. A place more fitting for such an Institution could hardly be found. God Himself has made the selection. It is easy of approach from all parts of the country, and on the confines of two great nations. We have full confidence that God will finish His own good work by inspiring the hearts that love Him, and His Blessed Mother of Mount Carmel, to contribute to the erection of a Church and Monastery there. Those pious souls will lay up for themselves treasures in the bosom of God, from which they will draw in their great need, when about to balance their accounts before His judgment seat.

Let us accompany the Christian soul in his religious pilgrimage at Niagara Falls. At first sight he will be overawed by its grandeur and stunned by its thun-

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rest recovering, he will raise his heart to the God that created it, and will presently sink down into the depths of his own nothingness. For a while he is completely absorbed, as if entranced; after a time he gains on himself, and cries out, "Praise, Praise, O Lord, O Lord, O Lord, how adorable is thy name in the whole earth." To speak now is unkind to him. His whole soul is filled with God; he wants to be alone. Fear, with an irresistible force, will relieve his heart, and he shall soon exclaim, "What, O Lord, is man, that thou art mindful of him; or the son of man, that thou shouldst visit him."

He looks upon that broad, deep and turbulent volume of water, dashing over the precipice about one hundred and sixty feet in height, and two thousand eight hundred feet in it, white foam with a thunder echoed from the lake below with its mountain banks, and thinks of the awful power of Him who peaks in the "voice of many waters," and of his own feet leap into eternity. He hopes he raises his eyes and sees, partly a glowing cloud formed from the spray, and in the centre by a beautiful rainbow. Again he cries out, "Let my prayer ascend as incense in thy sight. Let my feet aligh be one of love, after making my peace with God and the world."

The water, as it sweeps over the Fall, sinks deeply by its weight and momentum, and after gurgling, seething and foaming, rises again to the surface. One is reminded of that purification which takes place after death, and the troubles and agonies of the pure soul in the process of purification, to be again of before its rising to enjoy the brightness and glory of God's sweet countenance.

The water of the lake below has also its warning lesson. It is solemn and still as death after a busy and turbulent life. Death holds many a deep secret of a good or an ill spent life. He is aroused from his reverie by the shrill and noise of an engine, as it whirrs on by the banks above, with its string of cars filled with the fashionable and the gay, some intent on pleasing others on gins.

"O," he may say, "poor mortals, how long will you hunt after vanity and be in love with lies. In a few years you will be all gone, and what will be the fate of your immortal souls for all eternity." Let us return with the pilgrims to the Monastery, and rest a little, and from the windows of his temporary cell contemplate the rapids above the Falls. It is morning. At the hour-on, where the waters and the cloud appear to meet, all is calm and tranquil. Soon the river contracts, and peacefully running for a while, it meets with ledges of rock, and dashing itself into foam and whirling eddies, form hundreds of small waterfalls, which, catching the rays of the morning sun, appear as so many white-capped billows of the sea after a storm. Joy and gladness are typified in those sparkling waves. Occasionally tiny rainbows may be seen encircling the brows of those miniature cataracts; and as innumerable bubbles fall, pearls and jewels are reflected in prismatic colors in the foam. In these are seen emblem of the morning of life, when candour, humility and loveliness portray the innocence of a happy soul basking in the sunshine of God's love.

Everything now is gay and joyful, and bright with hopes of wealth and pleasure, and a long and happy life. The world presents itself in all those gorgeous colors that dazzle the imagination; but the time shall come when disappointment, sorrows and sickness will overtake him; a troubled and stormy life may be his lot; and he shall be, when the soul shall tremble on the precipice of eternity, awaiting to be

where I into the presence of my Father. Then indeed I will the pleasures and honors of the world appear as man's enemies, and as prizes for Christ the only treasures worthy of man's toil.

A few will not be content with a city which is a no-man's-land. The unheeding Christian dwells on the shore of contentment and would be carried away from pleasure to pleasure, until at length he sinks in the mire of dissipation, and is carried down into an end, up to eternity, from which there is no return.

One time I was a part of the crowd that covered the whole country at the Falls. The atmosphere of gloomy and dark clouds was everywhere, from case here. The boat of the Catholic, containing passengers from the various parishes, seems like a continuous distant throb of the heart, a pulse of life, a source of refreshment, and is brought to think of the Father, the Holy Spirit, the Virgin Mary, the Holy Sacrament, and the saint. If a rapid current, and a whirl of the rapids, would add their terrors to the scene, the soul must be for pity, with the cry, "Save me, O God, from the hand of the wicked, and of the assembled multitude of sinners, and from the displeasure of the righteous." "What hast thou done with thy own soul, and with the souls of thy brethren? What hast thou done with thy own grace, and with the graces of thy God, and with the souls that thou hast sanctified, and named both by water and by the Spirit?" when night comes on the soul is wrapped in a gloom, and a darkness, and a cold, and a long, for some seem to repose. How sweet and how serene, and how comfortable, it seems to retire to the chapel of Our Lady of Peace, where the heart, though oppressed with sadness, yet raises itself up to God in hope to receive, and come to receive, and grace through the intercession of His blessed Mother.

In the midst of the rapids are seen small islands covered with cedar and balsam trees sitting quietly in the sunshine, the waves dashing around them. The pilgrim may be reminded here of the soul strong in the grace of God and calm in the midst of the troubles of the world: and yet? "In a flood of many waters they shall not come nigh unto him." Psalm xxxi.

How many hearts, after having discharged their load of sin and sorrow in the tribunal of Penance, will become in themselves a land of peace, and the rainbow of hope, and of the glory of some ground with eyes, and with heart, of gratitude, welling up from an humble heart, and a lowly voice. O God, our Father, merciful God, who, notwithstanding his many crimes, was pitied and found in the robe of innocence, and on his finger the ring that should be given him, of a father's love and of a son's gratitude and fidelity, O God, our Father, will mercy be youth. In this holy retreat of Niagara Falls, and in the calm and quietude, the true pleasure of serving God, and the real joy of having escaped the terrors of the world to come.

In winter time, also, the pilgrim will be taught sublime lessons. The trees and shrubs around are covered with ice, and hundreds of glassy pendants hang from the branches, reflecting in dazzling brightness the rays of the sun, and by night those of the moon. May he not consider a soul enriched by the beauty of God's graces, purchased for Him through the blood of Christ. He will hear a crash. It is a branch of a tree that breaks down under its weight of icicles. Alas! how many souls break away from God, though highly favored with His special graces, and are never again engaged on the vine that is Christ. Again, may it not remind him of the death of the young, the beautiful, and the high-born, snatched away from the caresses of friends, the splendors of fortune, and laid low in the grave. The lunar bow

by night will give him hope, that in the darkest hour of grief and sorrow, God's mercy, which is always approachable.

The Cathedral of Niagara has a fine well-carved "native" high altar. The water, as it descends, is chanted from the choir, with the prayer, the incense; the rainbow, the light on the altar. One might say, out of God is the Lord and redeemable are his works. How great is thy name through the wide world. Let us adore and love him with our whole hearts and our whole souls.

As the pilgrim passes over one of the bridges that span the islands, he will see torrents of water rushing madly, as it were, on the clouds, the only background to be seen; and he is reminded of the "curtains of heaven opened, and the earth drowned on account of sin." Here the soul, overwhelmed with terror, might exclaim: "Come; let us hide in the clefts of the rock, in the wounds of Jesus Christ, from the face of an angry God."

New beauties are constantly discovering themselves at Niagara. The eye, wandering from beauty to beauty, compels the soul to adore its Maker. "As always ancient and always new."

The pilgrim may cast his mind back a few centuries, and consider the Indians, encamped around the Falls, telling the simple tales about the creation of the world, and adoring God in the twilight of their intelligence in the best manner they could; and he might vividly picture the whole tribe preparing the most beautiful virgin for sacrifice. She is dressed in white, and placed in a white canoe, the father and mother, sister and friends, bidding their partings and setting her cheeks with tears as they placed her in the frail bark, and shoved it off on the edge of the great precipice, that she might be a sacrifice of propitiation and sweet pleasure to the Great Spirit, to obtain pardon for the sins of her tribe, and good hunting. What sublime reflections will the recollection of this awful ceremony bring up.

God is great and powerful and just; but He is appeased with a Sacrifice. "An humble and contrite heart, O Lord, thou wilt not despise." The poor Indians must have heard of the great sacrifice which God always commanded as an acknowledgment of His sovereign dominion over the whole world, and of the sacrifices which he exacts on a count of sin. Perhaps they heard of the great sacrifices of Adam and of Noah, Isaac and Jacob, and of the sacrifice of the Virolde Isaac of God. In their simple ignorance they wished to sacrifice something themselves; the young, pure and handsome virgin is their greatest treasure. She is sacrificed. She is sent over the Falls. They are all now dead in mercy gone to be born again, when they stray to worship, and in the language of David appeal to Him to remember not their ignorance nor their sins: "Remember not, O God, our ignorance." May not the Christian soul here say to God: "I have been endowed with knowledge and with wisdom and with grace, and know that my soul was offered in sacrifice for me; and I wish to make no sacrifice myself, which should not have been sacrificed my evil passions and worldly inclinations. Come, poor Indians, teach me your simplicity, which is better than my foolish wisdom."

Again he will see a bird calmly and joyously flitting across this mighty chasm looking down fearlessly on the scenes below. It is in a native air; it has wings to soar. Thus the soul that is freed from sin has its wings also. It can look down with serenity upon the wreck of worlds, and in death it is placid in the midst of

seen in the *Journal of the Catholic*  
*Register*, or *another*, *place* (see *above*).  
By the *fall* of the *sun*, and *downward* to  
being taken to one sailing on the water, *fall*,  
the storm of evil spirit, and when everything around is in fury and commotion, *fall*,  
arises quietly towards its God to rest calmly in His embrace.

The Catholic Church, or to speak more plainly, the obtuse rich souls under her influence, always sought the most beautiful and romantic places to erect monasteries and churches to the service of God. Christ Himself retired to the mountain to pray, and He sought the solitude of Thabor to manifest His glory, and Gethsemani to pour forth His sorrows into the bosom of His Father. The soul, withdrawn from the din and the noise and the burthen of this world, breaks from its tension and strain towards God. The Fathers of the desert sought the wilderness and the mountain tops, there to adore Our Lord. Our forefathers in the faith also peopled the islands in the Atlantic, erecting their monasteries in clefts overlooking the mighty ocean, where the Monks sat and contemplated God in the fearful storm and in the raging wave that dashed over the rocks, and admired the works of His providence in the flight and escape of the ravens and gulls. In a storm they would imitate soul in distress crying out, "Where is my God." See them also on the islands of the blessed Lough Erne. They beheld the serenity of the sky above and the peaceful waters below, and were led to sweet and calm repose in God. Again, they sought the clefts of the mountain overlooking the smiling valleys, where they could feast their eyes on the rich and bounding of God in the fertile field below, and pity busy mortals in their need and toil into the things that perish. Behold the lilies of the field, the birds of the air, God clothe and provides for all. He fills the soul that is empty of this world.

In Europe there are many sanctuaries, but few in this new world. Nevertheless will be one, and first of the most famous where God will be adored on the spot in which He manifests Himself in such incomparable majesty and grandeur. The festivals that will be most religiously celebrated in this sanctuary, besides the first-class Festivals of the Church, are the ninth of July, called Our Lady of Miracles or Peace; the sixteenth, Our Lady of Mount Carmel; twenty-ninth of September, the Festival of St. Michael; fifteenth of October, St. Teresa; twenty-first of November, Presentation of the Blessed Virgin; and the tenth of December, Festival of Our Lady of Loretto.

We exhort you then, beloved brethren, to contribute according to your means to this noble work, and, if possible, on your pilgrimage to this retreat, accompanied with a few days of retirement, which will add largely to your appreciation of God's works and wonders, and will lead you to greater earnestness in the service of so great and good a Master.

The Peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

✠ JOHN JOSEPH LYNCH,

Archbishop of Toronto.

Given at St. Michael's Palace, on the Feast of St. Mark, April 25, 1876.

LETTER of His Grace the Most Rev. J. WALSH, D. D., Arch-  
bishop of Toronto, to the Superior of Conventual Monastery

Toronto, May 23, 1890.

*Rev. A. Kirill, Prior, Monastery of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, Kingston Falls, Ont.;*  
DEAR FATHER KIRILL -

I am glad to hear that your intense and generous means will allow you the construction of a home for spiritual retreats at Niagara Falls, in this neighborhood. I sincerely hope that your appeal to a large public for the furtherance of this most praiseworthy and meritorious object will meet with the success it so eminently deserves. A Retreat House, conducted by your religious sisters, could not fail to do much good for the edification and sanctification of souls, especially in a place and amid surroundings where nature itself invites to solemn thought and serious reflection, and where, in very deed, one hears "The voice of the Lord upon the waters, the God of majesty hath thundered, the Lord upon many waters." (Psalm cxviii.)

Wishing your pious undertaking the divine blessing and a happy issue,

I am, dear Father Kirill,

Your sincerely in Christ,

✠ JOHN WALSH,

Archbishop of Toronto.

THE PRINCE, St. Catharines, May 30th, 1890.

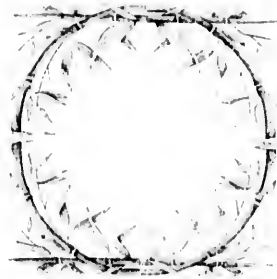
*My Dear Father Kirill:*

Do me the kindness to accept the enclosed as my personal subscription towards the great and good work you have entered upon. The Retreat House you propose to build will be a blessing to the Dominion, and cannot fail to meet with the approbation and encouragement of all who are interested in the edification of souls.

Wishing you every success, I remain, my dear Father Kirill,

Very truly yours,

W. E. HARRIS, Dean.



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