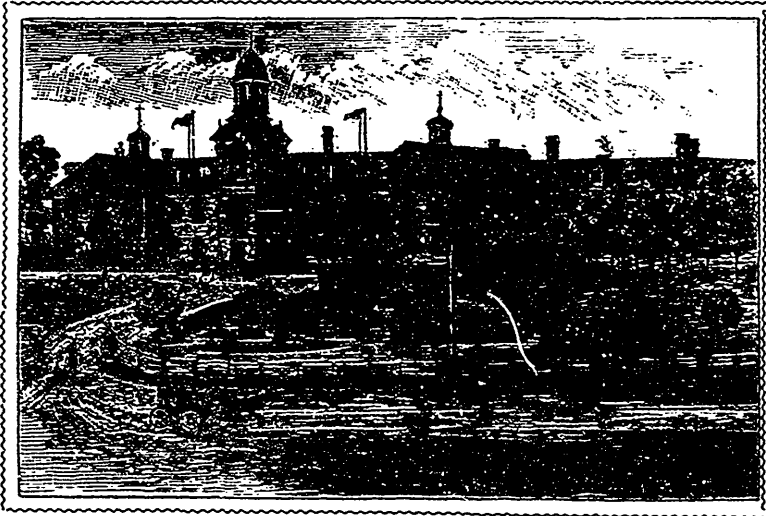


EXCELSIOR.

NOVEMBER,
1898.



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W B M Isaac

EXCELSIOR.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY STUDENTS OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER'S COLLEGE.

Vol. 3. ANTIGONISH, N. S., NOVEMBER, 1898. No. 3.

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ADVERTISING RATES.— One inch, single Column, \$1.50 per year.
One inch double column, \$3.00 per year.
Other rates on application.

Address all communications to

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ANTIGONISH, N. S.

Since our last issue an important step in advance has been taken by the College management. As the motto is *Excelsior* the directors shrink from no undertaking calculated to improve the institution and bring it nearer their ideal—to make it *the Catholic University of the Maritime Provinces*. With this end in view a class in Law has been opened. This, coupled with the many material improvements of the present year, makes a long stride forward.

For the present there are lectures in Constitutional History, Contracts and International Law, but eventually a full course in judicial lore will be given. The Faculty has been fortunate enough to secure the services of Messrs. A. McGillivray, C. E. Gregory and Jos. A Wall, to lecture on the foregoing branches respectively.

Those of the students who purpose following the profession of law have here an excellent chance of beginning their studies. All who, at the end of the year, pass the examination successfully will be admitted to the second year classes at Dalhousie Law School without further test. This advantage will certainly draw all prospective disciples of Blackstone into the class, but we believe all the undergraduates would do well to attend.

We say that all who have the privilege should attend the

lectures in law. One may be a good citizen without any further acquaintance with the legal character of our government than those vague notions of it that are found in all civilized communities. Yet it is only when we rise above this common level that we can exert influence for good. With some scientific knowledge of the working of the law we cease to be mere passive and indifferent citizens; we become active and zealous members of society. If even the college trained portion of our population, small though it be, were possessed of exact notions of the right and the wrong may we not surmise that, through appeals to their better judgment, litigation would be materially decreased — “a consummation devoutly to be wished.” This might affect the income tax levied upon the earnings of lawyers but even they can not deny that there would a great moral gain.

The subject of law is, in itself, a very interesting one and some knowledge of it imparts to the study of many social and international questions such a charm that we come to take a keen interest in what before was most irksome. We should all, then, avail ourselves of the opportunity placed within our reach and improve our status as citizens by learning more thoroughly what our duties are; for then only can we discharge these duties as rational beings knowing the how, the why and the wherefore.

CLASS OF '98.

“ Make Room and Let him Stand before our Face.”

Somewhat early in the term '93-'94 there appeared on the College Campus among many others a youth of rather more than ordinary intelligence and precocity. Although a “ Freshman ” he was by no means “ verdant.” Anyone who saw J. F. C. a few hours after his arrival strutting about the grounds, his hands planted firmly in his pockets, with a skull-cap of the period sitting jauntily on the back of his head could not fail to set him down as the very embodiment of self-complacency and non-chalance.

As we have remarked, he had stepped on the stage of Collegiate life at that age to which Shakespeare attributes a “ shining morning face,” and certainly J. F.'s did shine, not with your soap-and-water gloss, but with the light of intelligence and self-reliance.

This latter quality was soon to be tested, for not many days had elapsed when he discovered that a band of youthful aggressors headed by one of their number whose pugnacious propensities had won for him an envied notoriety was bent on subjecting him to a systematic persecution, which, unfortunately, College boys have been known to inflict. In elegant phraseology they had determined to "sit" on him. Having secured a backer, J. F. wrote out an elaborate challenge for a "meet" BEHIND THE HEN-COOP within a period not exceeding twenty-four hours. Such promptitude suggested unpleasant possibilities. The enemy prudently concluded to desist from further molestation and J. F. established for himself a prestige which precluded all fear of future trouble.

As time rolled on it revealed J. F. C. as the possessor of many qualities, chief of which were his originality of ideas and his illimitable power of argumentation, inasmuch as, like the famous Irish pedagogue:

"E'en though vanquished, he could argue still."

Philosophy was his *forte* and here he held a most diversified creed. At one time he was generally accused of scepticism, but this scepticism was always moderate and yielded, though sometimes reluctantly, to the force of stern logic. There were occasions, however, when he seemed to have adapted for his motto:

"Come one, come all, this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I."

In debate he could always hold the attention of the house. But he never appeared in his proper element in a regular debate. It would seem that his ardent temperament found the rules and restrictions of the debating society irksome and depressing. He delighted in a rapid "give-and-take" form of discussion where formalities might be dispensed with and where an expletive more forcible than eloquent might be employed for purposes of emphasis without any violation of the proprieties. In such cases he almost invariably issued from the contest victorious.

He never seemed to desire the reputation of an orator. We remember an incident which would go to bear this out. On the night of one of our most interesting debates J. F. arose in his seat to deliver a speech which he had previously committed to

memory. Had he delivered it as memorized and with appropriate elocutionary gestures (in which, by the way, he was an adept) the result must have placed him on the topmost round of the oratorical ladder. But instead of boldly declaiming he proceeded to mix in some raw material and to invert the order of a sentence once in a while—just to *tone down* the effect. He succeeded — for the speech ended amid a perfect concert of snoring.

Of his fame in the Index Debating Room we shall say but little. Be it merely noted that it required no extraordinary effort on his part to maintain a political discussion with half-a-dozen opponents while at the same time pursuing the avocation of a true Knight of Nicotine.

His reputation as a dinner speaker was no less marked. We feel confident that the fame of his peculiar method of drawing attention to particularly strong points and punctuating the same will pass down to the *third and fourth generation of the students of St. F. X.*

And now perhaps enough has been said. But this sketch would be very imperfect did we fail to make some mention of his great good nature, his obliging disposition and unaffected manner, his rare fund of humor, his inflexible determination irresistible

“As the rapid torrent of the mountain flood.”

EXCELSIOR wishes and predicts his success.

Somewhere late in the spring of '91 they entered St. F. X. as a student A. J. C., one of the cleverest of the class of '98. At that time he was practically unknown to the other boys, but being a good fellow generally, he was ere long recognized as one who had in him some of the stuff which men are made of. He early attached himself to a little coterie of students who worked hard and who also found time for an occasional harmless diversion. How widely separated are the members of that little band to-day! A. J. himself is moulding the minds of the rising generation down by the fog-bound coast of L'Ardoise. Another, perhaps the fairest gem in that circle of jewels, is in one of the cities on the Atlantic coast, making a name for himself as a great instructor of youth. Still another is sojourning in a land where the inspiring scream of the eagle strikes the ear. And last, but

by no means the least, separated from the troubles of this world, resides another in one of the upper provinces protected by the sacred walls of a religious home.

As A. J. "progressed in outward things and in wisdom" he determined to put a handle to his name, in the shape of a B. A. Hence throughout his college course (which was somewhat interrupted, for he occasionally taught school) he was a plugger, so to speak. He exhibited a great fondness for mathematics; this was undoubtedly due to the peculiar shape of his head. Nevertheless he by no means despised the classics, and it is said that he became quite proficient in Greek. He knew English well also, for during two years he was one of the editors of EXCELSIOR and in that capacity merited the praise of his fellows. Besides being versed in the mathematics and the classics A. J. knew a little about human nature. Hence he made a good prefect. He got along very well with his subjects who respected him, and who, it may be said parenthetically, are well satisfied with his *ditto*.

Towards the latter part of his course, A. J. became quite a debater, that is he argued clearly, always showing a good knowledge of logic. He sometimes tried to be witty, but here he failed; yet he always laughed at the jokes of others, particularly when he saw the point. During the session of the Mock Parliament of '98 he held the portfolio of Minister of Justice in the cabinet of O'C., who thought "it would be wise" to have such a man as A. J. The choice was a good one, as our friend with his wonderful knowledge of mathematics, was able to argue skillfully and successfully on financial matters with the dark and dangerous leader of the opposition.

A. J. was an ardent admirer of all kinds of sports and frequently indulged in base-ball, hand-ball, and lawn tennis. He was a good tennis player, particularly if the day was dark, the wind high, and but few spectators present. It was probably on this account that he always boasted after sunset how well he could play tennis. He was also a very formidable opponent at the cribbage board (block it used to be). In fact during his cribbage days only two persons could "hold" him, namely the old King's pupil and of course the redoubtable old King Cribbage himself.

A. J., it is currently reported, considered himself good looking (yet he wore glasses). Of course no one denied that he belonged to the genus homo, but we scarcely believe that his

accidental qualities differed very much from those of the ordinary run of mortals. It is whispered, too, that when royalty's representative visited our little town A. J. was smitten with the charms of a certain high born young lady. But for this, so far as we can learn, there is no better evidence than hearsay; and, in any case, it seems improbable on the *face* of it.

Taken all in all, A. J. C. was while with us a charming good fellow. His talents are far above the average; he has lots of common sense; hence we predict for him a successful future. That he may be a credit to his Alma Mater, a joy to his friends, and a faithful servant in whatever calling he may choose to adopt, is the fervent wish of EXCELSIOR.

THE SOPHOMORE STUDENTS.

In College life continued strife
 One very of'en finds;
 Our years, of course, act as a force
 Which severs and combines.

The Freshies say, with loud-voiced bray,
 They're the greatest link in the chain;
 And the way they blow about all they know
 Would give a mummy pain.

And getting gay, they try to say
 Smart things at our expense;
 Their jokes are dry, they don't apply,
 And seem devoid of sense.

But 'twill come to pass that the Sophomore class
 Of two years hence they'll fit;
 For from all that I hear, these Freshies, I fear,
 Will as Freshies a long time sit.

We're the golden mean that lies between
 Extremes, and wise men say
 Let not your goal be either pole,
 But take the middle way.

So if you belong to the Sophomore throng,
 You're sure to be all right;
 We, hand in hand, as brothers stand;
 As soldiers brave, unite.

BIG BEAR.

It was a good long time ago, a period which antedates the memory of many of those who now frequent our lecture-halls, when J. M. — first came to College. There was little in the appearance of the new student which gave indication of the remarkable characteristics he possessed, and the remarkable ways in which he was destined to distinguish himself. He had come from a portion of this country noted for the ruggedness of its physical features and the robustness of its people. His stature was slightly below the average, but he was heavily built, and, when the occasion demanded it, capable of exerting great strength. His movements were exceedingly slow; his countenance singularly inexpressive. These qualities coupled with his unsociableness, suggested to a facetious race of students, a similarity between him and a grim, taciturn animal which infests the mountainous regions from which he had come. J. early received the title of "Big Bear," a title by which during the rest of his College days he was accustomed to be distinguished.

To an inquirer he stated he had come to College to attain a thorough mastery of English, Music, Latin and Philosophy. All these were taken up, English being the first to be vigorously assailed. At once he made a fierce onslaught on McCabe's Grammar, — fifteen or twenty years ago the *belo wirt* of every school-boy. This work was an old acquaintance of his. He had had some tough tussles with it before. The definition of Etymology repeatedly attacked, had repeatedly baffled his most heroic endeavours. He had been more successful with the Parts of Speech. These met him at first with high defiance, but after a protracted siege were securely grasped. He was able to repeat, too, word for word, the definition of a noun. Here, however, his advance had ended. The lofty ramparts of Number and Person loomed up on the horizon and seemed impregnable against any forces he could muster. So he wisely desisted from attack and retired.

But his was not a mind to be easily discouraged. He had fallen back only that he might renew operations with redoubled energy when a favourable time should arrive. The time seemed to have come now. There was a something about his new surroundings which caused difficulties apparently to decrease. He became inspired with fresh courage and with fresh hope. This, he thought, is the opportune time to strike. The old arch-enemy, Etymology, was subjected to a furious assault and after a

tremendous conflict was vanquished. Success gave increased confidence and Number and Person were successively overcome. But new obstacles blocked the way. Each advance but disclosed greater and greater difficulties. Each victory served to show more and more powerful enemies. To get through the book seemed an herculean task. But for some time longer J — hung stubbornly to his work. There were here in the early '80's old students who used to tell that they had seen him many a time walking through the grove, swinging by one cover his old antagonist, the dog-eared grammar, and resolutely pounding away at the fortifications of Gender. It is generally supposed that he ended his endeavours before he had arrived at the confines of Case. Whether he was terrified by the hostile regions before him, or whether more attractive fields allured his adventurous spirit, has not been recorded.

Then, as now, the domain of Music held out many inducements to the aspiring student, and like most of his fellow-Collegians, J. eagerly entered upon this study. For a long time his unpretentious deportment in the Music class led most of the boys to suppose that those great powers he had brought to bear on the difficulties of Grammar were of no avail in this new department of knowledge. But this was a rash conclusion. True, he never became celebrated for singing. His free and intrepid genius refused to be shackled by the arbitrary rules to which the ordinary singer subjects himself, and he experienced the fate too common with innovators. But in the theory of Music it is universally acknowledged he made great progress. On this matter we fortunately possess indisputable evidence. There is still extant, — or if not extant now, it was not long ago, — a fragment of a paper which J. wrote at an examination. A large part of this paper has met with the same fate which befell all the other papers he wrote. It is utterly and irretrievably lost to us. But what remains is sufficient to show the great proficiency he had attained. The following questions had been asked: —

1. What is Music?
2. What is Harmony?
3. What is Melody?

To these the following answers were given: —

1. Music is square blocks placed on lines.
2. Harmony is when all the singers is singing together at the same time.

3. Melody is when all the singers is not singin together at the same time.

Who, reading these replies, does not experience the same feelings with the reader of Plutarch's Lives, and wish that the lost works of the author could by some means be recovered?

At an early period in his College career J. undertook the study of Latin. Here his wonted courage was displayed. Nepos and Caesar were successively attacked, and, it is related, successively worsted. Nor was either considered by our brilliant student, a foeman worthy of his steel. So he valiantly plunged into the intricacies of Cicero. Concerning the progress he made here our knowledge has not the same certainty with that which we have of his musical achievements. It has been handed down that he could pronounce all the words of one paragraph without stuttering. But this is a point on which reliable information, perhaps, will never be attainable. J. is said to have boasted once that he could beat one man in "Kickero," - to give his own elegant pronunciation.

About the time he laid siege to Cicero he plunged amidst the arcana of Philosophy. But let no man dream of success in every pursuit. The brilliant grammarian, the distinguished scholar who had played havoc with the productions of Nepos and Caesar and had scaled the ladder of Gregory, was obliged to confess himself completely discomfited amid the labyrinths of Zigliara. Like a mad bull he had blindly charged again and again. But strength and ferocity were of no avail. The foe secure amid the mazes of his retreat, boldly defied the bewildered student. J. saw that further attack were madness and prudently drew off his forces. He never essayed Philosophy afterwards.

Though possessed of great strength he was one of the most pacific of mankind. Even the severest provocations seldom ruffled his temper. All sorts of pranks were played on him by mischievous juniors and sometimes by meddling seniors. His religious fervour generally caused him to come late to the dormitory at night, and his bed was always on such occasions fixed so that as soon as he tumbled into it, it crashed down to the floor. To find out the culprits might have been easy, for their half-suppressed titter usually betrayed them. But "Big Bear's" sluggish disposition had little in common with anger. With a grunt, perhaps indicative of momentary ire, he would stretch himself out and sleep where the bed had fallen. It is said he

once told the Rector the boys used to play tricks on him.

But it was during a day fit for snow-balling that poor J. suffered the most. It was no unusual thing to see a whole host of urchins waylay him in the grove, or follow him with their icy missiles beyond its confines. They seemed to think they had a right to play upon his good nature. Only once was his temper visibly aroused. A party of three were following him. He repeatedly warned them, but without avail. At last he was struck a stunning blow behind the ear. With unexampled agility he sprung round and swore an awful oath. His fiercely flashing eyes, his tightly clenched fists, and the extraordinary ferocity of his entire appearance threatened dire revenge. He hesitated a moment as if preparing to charge, and that moment gave his assailants a chance to disappear. But they were more careful after that.

Seldom did any unsuspecting intruder feel the crushing force of his bearish hug. Only one instance of this is on record. A fellow of Cyclopean mould had recently come to College. Exulting in his strength, he longed to grapple with somebody. He was told "Big Bear" was powerful. But the shortness of the man misled him, and he felt assured of certain victory in the event of a contest. He had not long to wait. One day a student, now a reverend P. P., came up to him in company with J., and told him J. longed to wrestle with him. With eagerness he rushed forward and grasped J. But he soon found he had made a mistake when, however, it was too late. His opponent was far more than his equal and with a quick movement lifted him from the ground and threw him on his back in the mud. Needless to say, ever after that no man dared to tackle "Big Bear."

There were many other features of J.'s character of interest and many other stories might be told about him. His brilliant wit, his genius for poetry, his extraordinary piety, his lofty aspirations, his debating talents, the withering scorn with which he used to refer to the vulgar study of Mathematics, his contempt for prizes and for degrees, all suggest entertaining fiascos. But this article is already too long and must be brought to a close. Not many students have ever become more conspicuous here than the subject of this sketch and it is safe to say that when the impartial history of the College shall be written few will receive more attention than "Big Bear."

THE CORRECT PRONUNCIATION OF LATIN.

The following query and answer is from the *American Ecclesiastical Review* of December, '97. It may be interesting to note that it is the Roman pronunciation that is followed at St. Francis Xavier's College.

Qu. My assistant and I have all along maintained a slight difference in the pronunciation of Latin; one of us having been accustomed to the manner of the Roman Seminary, the other retaining the ordinary Continental pronunciation taught in most of our colleges. Recently there seems to have been some reform in this matter, and as a consequence we have had to submit to some criticism, not only from a college professor in a neighbouring institution, but from various half-fledged blue-stockings who devote themselves to a revival of antique letters and who advance clever reasons for saying *Kikero* instead of the old fashioned *Cicero*. They are particularly incensed against the Italian pronunciation, calling it absurd, artificial and justifiable only for Italians who find it convenient because of their own language. No Roman of the Augustan age, they say, ever pronounced *tshivitas* for *civitas*.

Now, whilst I do not want to be behindhand in proper culture, I dislike the idea of introducing in the public service the chant "Qui es in koelis; sanctifiketur nomen tuum, etc.," which would certainly arrest the attention of the congregation, and suggest the idea of affectation or the like. What are really the merits of the case? And is there any right reason for our adopting this Augustan pronunciation, which, if done, should, it seems to me, be done by all the clergy together?

Resp. There is just a trifle of arrogant ignorance in the attempt to render the Italian pronunciation of Latin absurd or to substitute for it any other. No doubt, the new pronunciation, is either that of the Augustan age or comes near to it, and very likely the friends of Cicero called him *Kikero* after the fashion of the Greeks. But that is a matter which concerns the Latin grammarian or the archeologist.

The Latin language, as far as it is to-day a living, that is to say a *spoken* language, is the language of the Catholic Church, of her clergy and of her international institutions. Now the pronunciation of a living language is not regulated by reference to any literary standard of the past. We consider Shakespeare and

Milton worthy of attentive study in our schools, but if anyone attempted to argue that we should adopt the pronunciation of two or three hundred years ago we should consider the claim absurd. Usage is the law of correct speech; and when there is a question of correct pronunciation we usually refer to some recognized centre of converse, where good usage has fixed the mode of speech, such as Paris, or Dublin, or Florence for the respective languages used there. The recognized centre of the Latin language, as far as it is a *spoken* and living idiom, is Rome. From Rome and to Rome lead all the roads in which the Latin language is heard, sung and spoken, in the elegant phrase of the classic scholar or in the medieval simplicity of the friars' jargon. Is it then strange that we should suit our speech to the manner of that great centre?

To say that it has changed some of its sounds is arguing nothing against its legitimate use. What language has not changed in two thousand years? Is there any that has changed so little? And if so, is it not due to the fact that the Latin Church, which claims the right of its present pronunciation, has spoken it all these centuries and preserved its living character?

On the other hand, the dilettante, the antiquarian, the student who pursues language as a literary curiosity or as a help to thoughtfulness, has a perfect right to inquire how Cicero or Chaucer or Shakespeare spoke, and to imitate the diction of these authors in all particulars. Their wisdom is misplaced only when they wish to force their views on the old Church and her habits. She was in possession long, long ago; she cultivated that language — the language of the Church by common consent — for practical living use, neglecting neither the classic grace of its golden age, as exemplified in Hilary of Poitiers, or Damasus, or Gregory, nor the rustic simplicity which made it an easy means of intercourse with the unlettered. Leo XIII. to-day imitates with matchless power the sweetly flowing *aleaics* of Horace, and gives them at the same time that originality which stamps their worth as separate works of art. To accept the Pope's Latin is as natural as to accept the Queen's English.

So let the collegians have their archaic way; but we shall claim the speech of our great city, Rome, as by right and title that of the Latin Republic in letters or out of them. For the rest, the matter has never troubled the Church, who has left each one to indulge his peculiar taste.

[r'or "Roman" in the third line read "modern Roman" or "Italian." The pronunciation of Latin which is supposed to have obtained in the Augustan age is now commonly spoken of as the "Roman."—ED. EX.]

DE MENDACIO HISTORICO.

The Reverend Dr. Reuben Parsons, well known as a hitherto frequent contributor to the very excellent Catholic magazine *The Ave Maria* and as the author of an "History of the Church" has collected sometime since many of his articles to the above-mentioned magazine and given them to the reading world in a work styled "Some Lies and Errors of History." As the title of the book will suggest it is purely historical and treats mainly of those many atrocious charges which are and have been so often made against the Church of Rome. The first article found in the work referred to is one which deals with the alleged immorality of Pope Alexander VI. and so successfully does the learned author dispel the cloud of infamy in which many historians would have the Pontiff enveloped, that it really makes one ask the question, "why, in truth, have men of supposed learning favoured such illusions?" The reader of the article cannot but be convinced that Dr. Parsons knows whereof he speaks, for he quotes freely from the historians who blacken the memory of the pontiff and also from those who, with a sense of justice about them, have treated their subject in such a way as to base their assertions on facts, not wild and hateful and carping imaginings.

It would be an infringement on the space of the College monthly to have the article reprinted *in toto*. We shall therefore try to gather the leading points and present them to EXCELSIOR readers. It is not surprising to find that the sources of the accusations against Pope Alexander are far from reliable. "The 'Diary' of Burkhard, a master of ceremonies at Alexander's court, is," says Gregorovius, the Protestant historian, "with the exception of the journal of Infessura, the only work concerning Alexander's Court composed at Rome. And it has an official character about it. . . . He never repeats mere rumors." If the "Diary" has an official character about it, it is indeed surprising for the reason that a humble master of ceremonies could hardly become acquainted with the court secrets. And, again, it is known that on almost every page of the "Diary" is read "si recte memini," or "si vera mihi relata sunt," or "fertur," which shows that the work of Burkhard must lack an official character and, on the contrary, assume the character of something not very much above conjecture.

After Burkhard, Guicciardini is the chief source of the charges against Alexander VI, and this historian is characterized by Bayle as "one who merits hatred" on account of his partiality; and Voltaire says of him that when he was asked on his death-bed, what should be done with his history—then only in manuscript—his reply was, "burn it." It is unnecessary to say that the history, which its author requested to be burned, can hardly stand as a reliable source of accusation. And indeed something of a similar character may be said of all the other accusers as a peruser of Dr. Parsons's article will readily see.

Pope Alexander VI—Roderick Llancol or Roderick Borgia—whose name has been made a synonym for lust, avarice, simony, etc., was born in the diocese of Valencia, in Spain, on January 1st, 1431. The young Roderick was noted for talent and his first choice of profession was the bar; but soon after he entered upon the career of arms. It was during his military life that Roderick met with Vanozza, whom some say he married. But even regarding this marriage there is much obscurity. The children supposed to have been born to Roderick by Vanozza were shown in a work published in 1880 by Leonetti a religious, and highly recommended by the present illustrious Pontiff, to have been the children of some Borgia especially loved by Roderick or of a brother who remained in Spain or of a son of his brother, the Prefect of Rome. But the question of the children is of little import if it can be shown that Vanozza was the lawful wife of Roderick and this too is most probable because Vanozza is mentioned in a work published at Madrid in 1605 styled the "Life of F. Francis Borgia," and it is altogether unlikely that if Roderick's relationships with Vanozza were not strictly legal, mention would be made of her in the life-account of a Borgia. After having been called to Rome by his uncle Pope Calixtus III. and made successfully "commendatory," abp. of Valencia, cardinal-deacon, and vice-chancellor of the Roman Court, there is no evidence that Vanozza ever appeared in Rome. But Roderick Borgia, although a "commendatory" abp. and a cardinal-deacon, had not as yet received Holy Orders. Nor is this the single instance in Church History. It was not necessary in those days for a cardinal or a "commendatory" bishop to take the vows of a religious life. Mazarni, the well-known French adviser, was a cardinal, but never received Holy Orders. It was in the year 1476 that Roderick Borgia was created a cardinal-bishop and

it was not till then that he received Holy Orders. During the time of his cardinalate of about 35 years, nothing of any note can be brought against him. A contemporary writes that his fellow cardinals were much pleased with him and the adverse historian Duboulai admits that during his cardinalate Roderick never was guilty of a public scandal. Cardinal Borgia was, however, blamed for his love of pomp, but it was predicted that he should become pope. After the death of Innocent VIII. a conclave was held and on August 12th, 1492, Cardinal Borgia was raised to the chair of Peter. A charge of simony has been laid on this conclave, but when it is known that men of eminent sanctity were among its members, it is hard, nay, impossible to believe that such a charge can be sustained. Fernus, whom Gregorovius styled "a by no means fanatical papist," says that the cardinals realized the appropriateness of the advice given by Bishop, Leonetti who had preached the funeral sermon of Innocent VIII. Leonetti had advised the cardinals to elect a man whose past life was a guarantee . . . a man worthy of being the Vicar of Jesus Christ. Several other contemporaries have written regarding the selection of Borgia and the most of them ascribe it to his great intellectual abilities, notwithstanding the assertions of Burkhard and Infessura to the contrary.

As to his pontificate one thing is certain, no public tumult ever endangered his authority or disturbed his repose. To cap the climax of their charges against Alexander VI, his defamers say that he was poisoned. Funny it is that they have not said that he poisoned himself! Burkhard and Voltaire believed him, however, to have died from natural causes. And surely those who place so much reliance on what Burkhard says regarding this Pope's life will accept what he says regarding his death.

There can be no mistaking it, Alexander's faults were highly exaggerated. 'Tis true the man was not wholly immaculate. He had faults but why exaggerate them? If historians would work honestly and find out both sides of the question, we should then have the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

BADDECK.

There is probably no place in Nova Scotia that enjoys a better reputation as a summer resort than the little village of Baddeck. Hither every summer come numerous Canadian and especially American tourists, driven by the heated atmosphere of dusty inland cities to seek the refreshing breezes of the Bras D'or Lakes.

For the past six or seven years the American tourists have filled the town to overflowing and have so stamped their individuality on the place that Baddeck seems more an American town than a Cape Breton village. The reason that Baddeck is so well known to Americans is probably, aside from the excellent facilities for recreation, the residence there of Prof. Bell of telephone fame, and George Kennan, the famous Siberian traveller.

However, before either of these distinguished men took up their summer home there, Charles Dudley Warner had made a trip to Baddeck of which he gives an account in his "Baddeck and that Sort of Thing," which has been read by thousands. The reading of this book has doubtless fired many with a curiosity to see the scenes depicted in it.

Baddeck has changed much since Charles Dudley Warner visited it, and many of the land-marks that impressed him have passed away. Even the "Double-Barrelled" church, as he called it from the Gaelic and English sermons preached there every Sunday, is falling into decay, and the old tower trembling in the slightest breeze, is tottering to a fall. Quite a modern spirit now pervades Baddeck. It has its own weekly paper, owns a handsome court-house and post-office, a port of call for Halifax and Newfoundland steamers, and boasts of the residence there of distinguished men.

Prof. Bell has done a great deal to better the condition of the village and vicinity. He has purchased and formed into an ideal park a forest-crowned hill just across the harbour from the town. This hill rises to the height of 500 feet above the waters of Bras D'Or, and from the summit can be seen the greater portion of the Bras D'Or lakes—a panorama that has no equal in Nova Scotia.

In the North East, peacefully reposes the little village of Baddeck, with the mountains of Big Baddeck rising up boldly in the back ground. To the West, stretches St. Patrick's Channel, a shining sheet of water, broken in the distance by the mountains about Whycocomagh. Southward, the lake converges to the Grand Narrows, where the spans of the Intercolonial Railway bridge can clearly be seen. The Island of Boulardarie lies to the south-east, bounded on the south by Little Bras D'Or and on the north by Big Bras D'Or—two narrow straits which join the Great Bras D'Or lakes with the Atlantic.

Prof. Bell has named this mountain "Beinn Bhreagh," which is certainly a very appropriate name. He has erected a fine residence, costing some \$37,000, on the southern slope of the

mountain; commanding a splendid view of the lakes. He has a large laboratory adjacent, in which the famous inventor is often seen busily engaged in some scientific experiment. For the last two years he has applied himself with great diligence to perfecting a flying machine, but, as yet, nothing practical in aerial navigation has come of it.

In addition to giving employment to a great number of men he has founded a library in Baddeck, established a Literary Association, and has given the young ladies of the town and County the rare advantage of a free sewing school.

In many ways he has done much to improve Baddeck, and Cape Bretonians in general and the people of Baddeck in particular, have no reason to regret that Prof. Bell has made his summer home there.

George Kennan spends about one-half of the year here, for the most part engaged in literary work, either writing magazine articles or preparing lectures for the following winter. He is extremely fond of boating, fishing, and all kindred sports, and the numerous yachts and canoes before his cottage testify that his Siberian adventures have by no means chilled his love for out-door life.

Various other American families have residences here. They come in the early spring and leave late in the fall. Indeed, it seems, from the increasing yearly influx, as if our Yankee cousins had serious intentions of taking possession of Baddeck in the name of the Republic. Even now the Stars and Stripes are more conspicuous there than the Union Jack, but perhaps this may be owing to the fact that every American house, from early morning to sunset flies its flag.

CATHEDRAL CHOIR CONCERT.

On the evening of Tuesday, November 8th, in the College Hall, a concert was given by the Cathedral Choir in aid of the building fund of Mt. St. Bernard's Convent.

This was the first occasion on which the hall was used since its enlargement, and the numerous audience in attendance demonstrated the need of the increased seating capacity. All were pleased with the improvements that had been made, especially with the new and permanent stage that occupies the full width of the hall.

The stage on this occasion was really a beautiful sight with its rich decorations, upon which the milk-white light of a twelve hundred candle-power incandescent arc, which hangs in the centre of the hall, shed its rays. Potted plants in great variety, and spreading palms, tapestried hangings, and numerous piano and banquet lamps that sent their rays through shades of divers hues and added a comforting warmth, were most artistically arranged, displaying the exquisite taste of the ladies of the Choir.

Vocal and instrumental music with a reading made up the

entertainment, of which we do not attempt any profound criticism. The playing of the orchestra aroused the enthusiasm of the audience; the rendering of the Scottish airs was particularly pleasing.

The Choir, a chorus of about sixteen voices, sang very effectively "Lord, Incline Thine Ear" and "The Lord said to My Lord," of Millard, and the "Magnificat," of Emerig. Solos, such as only well-trained voices could render with good effect, interspersed the choruses, and they were sung in splendid style. The most noticeable characteristic of the chorus singing were good phrasing, effective shading, and a constant display of precision.

Three quartettes, one male, another female, and the third of mixed voices—were noteworthy numbers of the programme. The male quartette did justice to themselves and to the music, while the quartette of young ladies, equally good from a musical point of view, was somewhat of a novelty. The quartette of mixed voices sang Thompson's gem "Come Where the Lilies Bloom," and this was one of the most highly appreciated numbers.

All the soloists merited commendation, but for lack of space we must forbear any individual mention. Miss McDonald was accompanist, and her playing contributed much to the success of the evening. The reading of "The Swan Song," by Prof. Horrigan, was a rare treat.

Artistically and financially, the concert was a pronounced success. It reflected great credit upon those who took part and laboured so faithfully for the worthy end in view. We hope it will not be long before we shall again have the pleasure of a concert by the Cathedral Choir.

ENTERTAINMENT.

Although very little has appeared in *Excelsior* concerning the Debating Society it must not be inferred that it is not progressing. On the contrary it is in a very flourishing state. It has been customary during the past few years to hold a monthly entertainment in connection with the debate. The students of the present year seemed to have surpassed their predecessors in this respect, as the entertainment held on the night of the 27th Oct. was without doubt the most successful ever given by the Literary and Debating Society. The following capital programme was carried into effect.

Pianoforte selection, Mr. Hayes; Recitation, "Women of Mumbles Head," A. Bernasconi; Song, "Don't Let Her Lose Her Way," W. Rawley; Recitation, "Doom of Claudius and Cynthia," A. Grattan; Flute selection, P. McCourt; song, "Banks of the Wabash," Mr. F. Blanchard; Highland Fling, Louis McDonald; Quartette, "Three Buzzing Bumbling Bees," Mr. McCurdy, Mr. Ralph McDonald, Mr. McIsaac and Mr. Blanchard; Violin Solo,

“The Mocking Bird,” Mr. D. C. McDonald; Recitation, “Toussiant L’Overture,” H. G. McKinnon; sword dance, Mr. Raymond Macdonald and R. St. J. Macdonald; Club-Swinging, Mr. R. Morrison; Reading, “A Man of Talent,” Mr. J. Wall; Mrs. Macleod’s Reel,” J. G. Macphail and R. St. J. Macdonald; Solo, “O Me, O My,” J. J. Corbett.

The entertainment was opened with a well-executed piano solo by Mr. Hayes.

The quartettes, chiefly by gentlemen from town, were exceptionally well rendered and were encored to the echo.

The recitations and readings by members of the Elocution Class were a rare treat and reflected much credit on the boys and their teacher.

Mr. Blanchard made at once a favourable impression. At the end of the first verse of “The Banks of the Wabash” the students gave way to an encouraging cheer and at the conclusion “ferit aethera clamor.”

But Mr. D. C. McDonald won the palm for the best thing in the evening’s entertainment. His violin performance roused his hearers to a high pitch of enthusiasm.

Everybody thoroughly enjoyed Mr. Morrison’s club swinging. It was remarkable with what dexterity he manipulated the clubs keeping time the while with rhythmic regularity to the beat of “We Won’t Go Home till Morning.” This exhibition was a pleasant interlude and as Mr. Morrison was only appealed to shortly before concert time his success was most creditable to him.

The Highland dancing by the Macs was gracefully performed and highly appreciated.

Mr. Corbett made a hit with “O me, O my,” and followed it with an inimitable rendering of “My Onliest One.”

A very hearty vote of thanks was accorded the chairman, and the singing of “God Save the Queen” terminated a very pleasant entertainment.

EXCHANGES.

The *Acadia Athenaeum* is a new visitor to our *sanctum*. When we observed "Vol. XXV." on its cover, we concluded that its contents must certainly show improvement—the outcome of lessons taught by time and experience. Nor were we mistaken, for upon examination of its pages, we found it to be a neatly arranged and carefully written journal. An interesting and exhaustive article which vividly portrays the character of Michael Angelo was one of its best features.

The "Greatest of Great Catholic Laymen," now running in *The University of Ottawa Review*, bids fair to be a very interesting and instructive article.

Judging from the editorials in the October number of *The Argosy*, we should say that its staff is composed of students who are capable of arriving at and maintaining a high standard for their paper. We feel, however, that we may make a suggestion without giving any offence. We notice that about ten pages are devoted to "The Heroes of '98." This must have been due to either oversight or lack of judgment—more probably the former. Devoting ten pages out of twenty-four to one article is, in our estimation, giving it too much space and robbing it of its interest to the general run of readers. Would it not be better to distribute such a lengthy article over two or three successive numbers, especially when the subject will permit such distribution? A greater diversity of subjects would add considerably to the attractiveness of the paper.

 PERSONALS.

Mr. R. H. Butts, B. A. '95, passed his terminal examination in law and was recently admitted to the bar. Mr. Butts is, we understand, to practise at North Sydney, C. B.

Mr. T. B. Kain, who attended St. F. X. for the past three years, is now studying Theology at the Quebec Seminary. EXCELSIOR and students wish you success, Tom, in your new studies.

We are happy to welcome our genial friend, Mr. J. Fitzpatrick, back again this year. Among other recent arrivals may

be mentioned Mr. D. J. Rankin, Mr. D Laney, and Master Henry Babin.

Rev. Father McLellan, Rector of St. Dunstan's, visited Antigonish lately, and was the guest of the College.

The following reverend gentlemen called at the College during the last month: N. McDonald, J. C. Chisholm, M. Doyle, A. R. McDonald, R. McKenzie, A. Chisholm (Creignish), R. H. McDougall, A. L. McDonald, Jos. McDonald, and H. Gillis.

ON THE HOP.

A discovery has been made in the middle dormitory which casts light on recent disappearance of chalk. Our detective thinks that Mac must use it as an appetizer.

Recently we heard of an instance where our friend "Ross," agent for books, etc., failed in receiving a *fair* order. Let us hope, however, that he has met with better success elsewhere, and that, when he returns from his trip to the city, he will be able to report progress.

Prof.—"What is an invertebrate?"

Smarty — "A man with no *backbone*."

INTERPRETATION.

All do freely claim that Mack
Has gifts of eloquence — not lack,
And, as a speaker in debate
We rank him not as second rate.

Some uncharitably agree
To say he lacks philanthropy,
And that his words — nor short, nor few —
Bespoke his narrowness of view.

I cannot think that he did mean
Intolerance or party spleen.
Or stoop to such unworthy end
As hurt the feelings of his friend.

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