

at some of the pictures and curiosities, and entirely ignored others. Approaching Father Girod when the other visitors had left the hall, this youth looked the priest squarely in the face, and asked: "But, after all, Monsieur l'Abbé, I should like to know why Catholic priests don't marry." Father Girod simply turned toward an Anamite picture representing the awful agony of Blessed Cornay, whom the executioners were cutting into pieces, and replied: "Look there, young man, and tell me whether, when one has a wife and children, one is apt to have a taste for that kind of life and death." The dandy did look, and then, respectfully asking permission to shake the priest's hand, wished him good luck and retired."

ADVENT.

ITS STORY AND ITS SYMBOLISM.

On Sunday next, December 2, the Advent season begins. The name is given by the Church to the period, of between three and four weeks from Advent Sunday (which is always the Sunday nearest to the feast of St. Andrew) to Christmas eve. During it she desires that her children should practise fasting, works of penance, meditation, and prayer, in order to prepare themselves for celebrating worthily the coming (*adventum*) of the Son of God in the flesh, to promote his spiritual advent within their own souls, and to school themselves to look forward with hope and joy to his second advent, when he shall come again to judge mankind.

It is impossible to fix the precise time when the season of Advent began to be observed. A canon of a Council at Saragossa, in 380, forbade the faithful to absent themselves from the Church services during the three weeks from December 17th to the Epiphany; this is perhaps the earliest trace on record of the observance of Advent. The singing of the 'greater antiphons' at Vespers is commenced, according to the Roman ritual, on the very day specified by the Council of Saragossa: this can hardly be a mere coincidence. In the fifth century Advent seems to have been assimilated to Lent, and kept as a time of fasting and abstinence for 40 days, or even longer—i.e. from Martinmas (Nov. 11) to Christmas eve. In the Sacramentary of Gregory the Great there are Masses for five Sundays in Advent; but about the ninth century these were reduced to four, and so they have ever since remained. 'We may therefore consider the present discipline of the observance of Advent as having lasted a thousand years, at least as far as the Church of Rome is concerned.'

With regard to fasting and abstinence during Advent, the practice has always greatly varied, and still varies, in different parts of the Church. Strictness has been observed, after which came a period of relaxation, followed by a return to strictness. At the present time, the Wednesdays and Fridays in Advent are observed as fast days by English and Irish Catholics, but in France and other Continental countries the ancient discipline has long ago died out, except among religious communities. In Australia, New Zealand, and the United States the general rule for fast and abstinence is only on Friday. All nuptial solemnities or festivals are prohibited during Advent.

There is a marvellous beauty in the offices and rites of the Church during this season. The lessons, generally taken from the prophecies of Isaiah, remind us how the desire and expectation, not of Israel only, but of all nations, carried forward the thoughts of mankind, before the time of Jesus Christ, to a Redeemer one day to be revealed; they also strike the note of preparation, watchfulness, compunction, hope. In the Gospels we hear of the terrors of the last judgment, that second advent which those who despise the first will not escape; of the witness borne by John the Precursor, and of the 'mighty works' by which the Saviour's life supplied a solid foundation and justification for that witness. At Vespers, the seven greater antiphons, or anthems—beginning on December 17th, the first of the seven greater Ferias preceeding Christmas eve—are a noteworthy feature of the liturgical year. They are called the O's of Advent, on account of the manner in which they commence; they are all addressed to Christ; and they are double—that is, they are sung entire both before and after the Magnificat. Of the first, *O Sapientia, quæ ex ore Altissimi prodixisti*, etc., a trace still remains in the words *O Sapientia* printed in the calendar of the Anglican Prayer Book opposite December 16—words which probably not one person in 10,000 using the Prayer Book understands. The purple hue of penance is the only color used in the services of Advent, except on the feasts of saints. In many other points Advent resembles Lent: during its continuance, in Masses de Tempore, the *Gloria in excelsis* is suppressed, the organ is silent, the deacon sings *Benedicamus Domino* at the end of Mass instead of *Ite Missa est*, and marriages are not solemnised. On the other hand, the *Alléluia*, the word of gladness, is only once or twice interrupted during Advent, and the organ finds its voice on the third Sunday: the Church, by these vestiges of joy, signifying that the assured expectation of a Redeemer whose birth she will soon celebrate fills her heart, and checks the gloom of her mourning with these gleams of brightness.

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THE SEE OF SYDNEY.

ELECTION OF COADJUTOR BISHOP.

THREE NUTSHELL BIOGRAPHIES.

As stated in our last issue, the election of a Coadjutor Bishop, with right of succession to the See of Sydney took place on Wednesday, November 14. At 9.30 a.m. the members of the Cardinal Archbishop's Council and the irremovable rectors, in response to the circular issued by his Eminence, assembled at St. Mary's Cathedral for the purpose of submitting names for Coadjutor Bishop to the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda. Mass was celebrated by the Rev. P. C. Cregan. His Eminence presided, and after Mass and the recitation of the solemn prayers prescribed for such occasions, the election by ballot took place. All the diocesan consultants and irremovable rectors, with the exception of the Rev. Father Harnett (pastor of Bega)—who recently lost his brother, the late Rev. Father Harnett, of Cooma—were present, and 18 votes were recorded. The voting resulted as follows:—

Right Rev. Monsignor Kelly, *dignissimus* (seven votes).

Right Rev. Monsignor O'Brien, *dignior* (four votes).

Right Rev. Dr. O'Donnell, *dignus* (three votes).

In accordance with the regulations framed in the Sydney Synod of 1885 and 1895, and approved by the Holy See, the three names selected will now be submitted by his Eminence the Cardinal to the bishops of the Sydney province, who may accept, reject, or substitute names. The names then recommended by the bishops will be submitted to the Archbishops of Australia, and the final recommendations will be forwarded to Rome, when the absolute selection will be made by the Holy See, which need not necessarily appoint—but usually does—one of the nominees.

RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR KELLY.

The Right Rev. Monsignor Michael Kelly, M.S.S., is at present Rector of the Irish College, Rome. He is a native of the town of New Ross, County Wexford, Ireland, where he was born some fifty years ago. His earliest studies were pursued in his native town, after which the first steps in his career towards the ecclesiastical state were taken in the diocesan Seminary of St. Peter's College, Wexford. He studied philosophy and theology with marked distinction in the great College of Propaganda, Rome. After his ordination to the priesthood he joined the distinguished coterie of zealous secular priests who, in 1868, banded themselves together, at the instance of the Right Rev. Dr. Furlong, Bishop of Ferns, and under the leadership of his saintly successor, for the purpose of conducting missions to the people throughout the diocese. Monsignor Kelly was, in that retreat of piety and learning, the companion and fellow-worker of the late Bishop Warren, of Ferns, of Bishop Brownrigg of O-sory, of Father Cullen, S.J., and of a notable gathering of secular priests who have left their mark deep upon the history of the diocese of Ferns. He sprang rapidly into note as a preacher, a temperance reformer, and spiritual director, and his missionary work carried him into almost every diocese in Ireland, into Liverpool, into other places in England, and, if our memory serves us right, into Scotland as well. He has conducted Retreats for ecclesiastical students, with conspicuous success, both in Maynooth and All Hallows. On the death of the Very Rev. Dr. Hassan, vice-rector of the Irish College, Rome, (who succeeded the Right Rev. Dr. Verdon, now Bishop of Dunedin, in 1888), nearly eight years ago, Monsignor Kelly was appointed by the Irish Bishops Rector of that historic institute, the Most Rev. Monsignor Kirby, titular Archbishop of Ephesus (the former Rector) having in the meantime resigned the office of Rector on account of his great age and growing infirmity. Shortly afterwards the newly appointed Rector was raised to the dignity of Domestic Prelate to his Holiness Pope Leo XIII., with the title of Right Reverend. Monsignor Kelly is not, as has been stated, representative of the Irish Catholic hierarchy at the Holy See, although he represents several of them in that capacity, and the Irish College is their recognised headquarters—as it is also of many of the Australasian Bishops—when paying their official visits *ad limina Apostolorum*.

RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR O'BRIEN.

The Right Rev. Monsignor O'Brien, D.D., is Rector of St. John's College within the University of Sydney. He is a native of Meath County, Ireland. His early course of ecclesiastical studies was pursued in All Hallows' College, Drumcondra, Dublin. The young cleric displayed during his course there such conspicuous talent that he was sent to Rome to complete his studies in the Pontifical Seminary of St. Apollinare, which was then, under the fostering care and freedom of the old papal regime, in the zenith of its fame as a seat of learning. Monsignor O'Brien greatly distinguished himself among the youth then assembled in 'the Apollinare,' as it was then and is still called, from every part of the old Papal States, from various other parts of Italy from Sicily to the Alps, and from the various national colleges in the Eternal City that sent their students to drink in wisdom there from the foremost professors of the day. The young ecclesiastic won his doctorate in theology while in the Pontifical Seminary. After his ordination to the priesthood he was appointed professor in his old Alma Mater, the Foreign Missionary College of All Hallows. He displayed great talent as a professor, and in 1887, when the position of Rector of St. John's College, Sydney, was rendered vacant by the resignation of the late Very Rev. Dr. Barry (who died some years ago while pastor at Pyramid Hill, in the diocese of Sandhurst) Monsignor O'Brien was chosen to succeed him. On the occasion of the visit of his Eminence Cardinal Moran to Rome in 1893 he was created Domestic Prelate of his Holiness, with the title of Right Reverend. Monsignor O'Brien is gifted with a fine presence and address, great social tact, and considerable literary ability—one of the most re-