

'Dear Rev. Father.—We, the Catholics of the Thames, assemble here to-night to express our sorrow at your departure from us, and to wish you every happiness in the new and extended sphere of usefulness to which the voice of God, in that of your superiors, has appointed you. During the short space of time in which, owing to the absence of our revered pastor on a more important mission, the care of this parish was assigned to you, we have seen how nobly and faithfully the onerous duties which that charge entailed have been discharged by you. Your priestly example has during these two years been the guiding star of those who outside the Sanctuary gates strive for the heavenly crown, and your kindly words have never failed to cheer those who have toiled with you, to comfort those on whom God's chastening hand has been laid, and to reclaim to His love and service the erring children of our holy mother the Church. Whilst assuring you of our hearty appreciation of these services and wishing you many years of health and happiness to continue your noble work, we wish also to assure ourselves of your kindly remembrance by your acceptance of the accompanying purse of sovereigns as a token of our good wishes in your regard, which will, we hope, often remind you also of praying for every temporal and spiritual blessing for your devoted children, the Catholics of the Thames.'

With the address Mr. Foy handed a purse to Rev. Father Mahoney, which was well filled with sovereigns.

In the course of his reply Father Mahoney said that he was afraid that the Catholics of the Thames were giving him credit for far more than he deserved, as they must not forget that when he came here he found he would have no difficulties to contend with, for owing to the administration of Monsignor O'Reilly everything was in perfect order, and so the kindly construction they placed on his efforts was perhaps not so well merited as it would be if the progress of the parish were due to his own initiative. He had come to the Thames with most pleasant anticipations of his stay here, which had been most fully realised, for everybody he met in Auckland who knew the Thames and knew he was coming, promised him that he would like his sojourn among the people of the district. One of the last persons he spoke to before leaving was an Anglican clergyman of his acquaintance, formerly stationed here, who assured him that he would like the Thames people of all classes and creeds, and he now found that after a stay of two years that such was indeed the case, for he could not wish to dwell among a more friendly and sociable class of people on the whole than those of the Thames, and he could quite understand Father O'Reilly's reluctance to leave them. What he appreciated most about the address and presentation was the cheerful and spontaneous manner in which they were given, and that his people should have shown their esteem for him in such a substantial way considering the short time he was among them. He would never forget their kindness wherever he might be, and hoped that he might yet be permanently located among them.

On Friday, March 1 (writes a correspondent), the pupils attending the Convent High School met in the schoolroom to say 'good-bye' to the Rev. Father Mahoney, who had been in charge of the Thames parish during the past two years. As a small token of their gratitude and esteem they presented him with a handsome reading lamp, and an address was read by Miss Nelly McDonnell, in which the children expressed their sorrow at having to say farewell to one in whom they had always found the kindest of friends and wisest of counsellors. They hoped he would carry with him many a pleasant memory of the Thames, and as they wished also to be kindly remembered by him, they trusted their little gift would serve to brighten many a dark hour, and be a constant and cheerful reminder of the many little friends who would treasure his memory at the Thames.

In reply, the Rev. Father thanked them from his heart for their beautifully worded address, and assured them that their gift would be highly treasured by him and would constantly remind him of the many bright hours he had spent with them. Also that he could find no words to express fittingly his gratitude to their parents and themselves for their great generosity towards him, and that in return he could only pray for every blessing for them. After giving his benediction to them he bade farewell to each child and left by the afternoon boat for Auckland. Crowds of people assembled at the wharf to say a last farewell to the Rev. Father, who during his stay at the Thames had endeared himself to all classes and creeds.

The Right Rev. Mgr. O'Reilly is expected back at the Thames in a few weeks, and until his return the parish will be served by different priests from Auckland.

During the Pontificate of Leo XIII.—1878 to 1900—no fewer than 134 of the Cardinals have died. Only four still live who were his fellow Cardinals under his predecessor, Pius IX.

One applicant for an old age pension at Bendigo, Victoria, in giving evidence as to his antecedents, claimed to be a nephew of William IV., and stated that his father was the British admiral who first planted the Union Jack on the Island of Ceylon. He was granted a pension of 5s per week.

Bishop Gaughran, who died recently at Kimberley, South Africa, and whose name was prominently before the public during the siege, was a distinguished member of the Oblates. Dr. Gaughran, who was a powerful and brilliant preacher and a devoted Prelate, was also a very effective platform speaker and an ardent advocate of Home Rule. So far back as September, 1887, when Bishop of Kimberley, he not only attended but spoke at a great mass meeting of Irishmen in favor of Home Rule which had been convened to hear an address on 'An Irish National Cause' from Mr. Swift MacNeill. It was then stated, and the statement was not traversed, that Dr. Gaughran had broken the record in being the first Colonial Bishop who had addressed the audience from the platform in favor of Home Rule.

Friends at Court.

GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR.

- March 17, Sunday.—St. Patrick, Apostle of Ireland.
 " 18, Monday.—St. Gabriel, Archangel.
 " 19, Tuesday.—St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church.
 " 20, Wednesday.—St. Cyril, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor of the Church.
 " 21, Thursday.—St. Benedict, Abbot.
 " 22, Friday.—St. Frigidian, Bishop and Confessor.
 " 23, Saturday.—Feast of the Most Precious Blood.

SAINT PATRICK.

St. Patrick, the illustrious apostle of Ireland, was born in A.D. 387 at Bonaven Tabernie in Armorican Gaul—Tabernie, or Travena, was near the site of the modern Boulogne-sur-mer. His father Calpornius, was the son of a Frankish chieftain, and at the time of Patrick's birth, was serving as a legionary officer. His mother, Conchessa, was a lady of gentle birth, and was probably grandniece of St. Martin of Tours. Both she and her husband were Christians, the latter having embraced the religion of his wife along with his father Potitus, who was raised to the ranks of the priesthood after the death of his wife.

Though brought up in the Christian religion, St. Patrick tells us in his celebrated 'Confession' that at the age of 16 he was still ignorant of God, which probably means that he had not yet attained to that lively knowledge and ardent love of God which then began to penetrate his soul. At that period he was carried into captivity by a band of marauders, who took him over to Ireland and set him to keep the cattle among the forests and mountains. Here he was exposed to many hardships and privations, but while his body suffered, his soul was strengthened by the exercise of prayer and the frequent consideration of the vanity and emptiness of earthly things. At the end of six months he succeeded by a special Providence in effecting his escape and returned to his own country. Some years later he was again carried off, but recovered his liberty after two months.

Meanwhile Patrick was inspired by God with an ardent desire for the conversion of the inhabitants of that pagan island which had been the scene of his sufferings, and it was revealed to him, moreover, that he himself was chosen for that glorious work.

On one occasion he beheld in a vision the children of Ireland stretching out their hands to him and imploring him to come to their relief. The tender heart of our saint at once responded to the call, and for some years he devoted himself to prayer and study in preparation for the work of the apostolate. After receiving the sacred orders of deacon, priest, and bishop in his own country, as he himself tells us, Patrick set out for Rome to implore from Pope Celestine his blessing on the work which he had undertaken. It is probable that at this time he visited St. Martin of Tours and St. Germanus of Auxere, making some stay in France on his way to the Eternal City. The holy Pontiff received him with paternal affection, and bestowed upon him his apostolic benediction, together with full powers for the prosecution of his mission. He then set out on his return, A.D. 432, and undeterred by the remonstrances of his friends and relatives, crossed over to the land of his former captivity which God had given him for his inheritance.

During the twenty-eight years of his laborious apostolate, St. Patrick penetrated into almost every part of Ireland, and has everywhere left memorials of his presence in the traditions of the people. God confirmed the truth of his preaching by innumerable miracles, and he is said to have raised no less than nine dead persons to life. But it was, more than all, his invincible patience and tender charity which won the hearts of his hearers and transformed the most savage natures into models of gentleness and docility. Wherever he went he erected churches and monasteries, and ordained priests and bishops to minister to the wants of his converts. He established his Episcopal See at Armagh, where he had built a monastery and where the Primacy has always remained in honor of Ireland's apostle. It is recorded that he held several councils to regulate the discipline of the Irish Church, and that on two occasions he visited the Tombs of the Apostles. So successful were the labors of this great saint, that he not only converted during his lifetime the whole of the island, rendering it a fruitful garden of saints, but he implanted the seed of faith so deeply in the hearts of his people that no storm of persecution nor artifice of man has ever been able to eradicate it. To St. Patrick is due also the introduction into Ireland and rapid spread of sacred and profane learning, which found an asylum in the monasteries and a congenial soil in the minds of the people. Thus it was that that country, which had hitherto been regarded as a land of infidelity and barbarism, became suddenly transformed into an island of 'Saints and Scholars.'

St. Patrick lived to an advanced age and went to his reward about A.D. 460. He was buried in Down, in Ulster.

It makes a great difference in the force of a sentence whether a man be behind it or no.

Death is the most solemn moment of our existence; it is then that the devil has the last battle with us. It is as if he were playing a game of chess with us and was watching the moment of death to give us checkmate. He who gets the better of him then has won the battle of life.

Reason knows that man becomes dwarfed the moment he loses hold of God, and that the bond between him and God—religion—ceases to be religion if it discards its sovereign attributes. If it declines from doctrinal truth and becomes but literature, philosophy, or art, it can do nothing more for man.