

August, 1867, brought on in Dundalk an attack of pneumonia which nearly proved fatal. I blessed God for it afterwards, because it procured for me a visit to Rome and the sojourn of a winter in that Eternal City. It happened thus: My attack of pneumonia had been in October, and the most distinguished doctor in Dublin, consulted on the matter, forbade me to spend the coming winter in Ireland; so my superiors were compelled to send me to winter in a warmer climate on the Continent. I went at first to Lyons (France), and while I was there who should come along but my venerable predecessor in the See of Wellington, Dr. Viard, and his chaplain, Father Tresallet, S.M. Dr. Viard had come to attend the Vatican Council about to be held in 1869, and my Superior General, Very Rev. Father Favre, S.M., and Father Yardin, S.M., well-known afterwards in Wellington, were to spend with him the winter in Rome. I obtained, as a great favor, from my general, who invariably was all kindness to me, the permission to be one of the privileged party. I shall never forget the extraordinary impression made upon me at the first sight of Rome with St. Peter's noble dome towering above the "City of the Soul"—as Byron aptly calls it. We started by train from Lyons and spent a night and a day in Marseilles. There was no railway yet from Marseilles to Rome, so we had to go by steamer to Civita Vecchia and thence by rail, 40 miles, to Rome. We embarked at night and during all the night underwent a terrific thunderstorm and a rough sea. I was in the same cabin as Very Rev. Father Favre, and, in the midst of the almost continuous claps of loudest thunder, an old rooster in a crate on deck, never failed to mark the watches of the night with his faithful instinctive crows. Father Favre drew my attention to this fact, despite the painful tossing of the ship. We arrived next afternoon in clear, bright weather, and took the train at Civita Vecchia. What a train! How slow, how ill-equipped, how mean in every respect! And what stations along the line! And what commodities! Disgraceful compared with all other railways I had ever seen. Father Favre commented forcibly and indignantly on its sad condition. "What a pity," he said, "that when the Papal Government attempted to build a railway, it did not achieve the work properly! Such an exhibition of failure lends a handle to all the fiercest enemies of the Temporal Power to mock and scorn. A good line might as well have been built as this bad, disgraceful one." We reached Rome at last in a delightful Italian evening after a gorgeous sunset.

What a delightful winter I spent in Rome! Father General most kindly furnished me with the best works he knew upon Rome, ancient and modern, and I devoured them from cover to cover. I had nothing to do but take care of my health and avoid going out in the keen morning air till the streets were warmed by the sun; and then study the books about the churches, shrines, catacombs, monuments of Rome, and, when I had stored my mind and fired my imagination about these treasures of antiquity and art, to go and visit them, again and again, at my leisure and inclination, often book in hand. At spare moments I wrote my impressions in all their vividness, and my letters, on receipt in Dundalk, were read in the refectory to the Marist scholastics, much, I was told, to their delight. What became of those letters I know not: at all events, they kept me in touch with my confreres and them with Rome.

BACK TO ERIN.

I returned to Ireland, in 1869, cured of my chest complaint, and was made Professor of Dogma to the Marist scholastics removed to Dublin. Fathers Leterrier, Pestre, and I spent several happy years at 89 Lower Leeson Street. I had with my Superior-General a private audience with his Holiness Pope Pius IX; and got his paternal blessing. When the time came for me to bid farewell to the City of the Popes, I felt a keen pang of sorrow, at the thought I should never set my eyes upon it again. I would fain have kissed the sacred soil so often drenched with the prolific blood of countless martyrs. How little dreamt I then that I should in my long lifetime return again and again and again to the Holy City, and have repeated audiences with four successive Popes—Pius, Leo,

Pius, and Benedict. Who knows? Perhaps I shall yet be favored to approach the sacred person of the present Pope Pius XI., ere I quit this vale of exile and tears.

Lower Leeson Street, has now a very flourishing day-school of which Dr. Watters, S.M., on his return to Ireland, at the end of his Rectorship in St. Patrick's College, Wellington, was made Superior, and where he died. He was shot—in all probability by the sentry—as he was leaving a house, over a mile away from Leeson Street, where he had called for a few minutes to inquire about the funeral of a priest. The military authorities published the news that he had been shot by a stray-ball at his own door. He was brought home the day after he was wounded, and lingered for a week, dying a most holy death. The authorities, when requested, refused to correct the first false news—another stain upon their much tarnished memory. I took care to have the correct version, given by his successor, Father McVicar, S.M., published in the *New Zealand Tablet*. A fine stone monument, erected to his memory, may be seen to-day in Glasnevin Cemetery.

EPISCOPAL CONSECRATION.

At the close of the Vatican Council my predecessor, Dr. Viard, returned to New Zealand, and shortly after fell ill. My superiors immediately began negotiations with Rome for my appointment as his Coadjutor, and, during the negotiations, he died, in 1872. Two years afterwards, when Dr. Moran (Bishop of Dunedin) had, by direction of the Holy See, visited the Diocese of Wellington, and made his favorable report upon it, I was appointed Bishop of Wellington in 1874, at the age of not quite 35 years—being then the youngest Bishop in the world. I was destined through God's mercy to become, by consecration, the senior Bishop in the Catholic world, and that is my unique distinction to-day.

While I was Professor of Dogma in Leeson Street, I preached for Father Verdon—afterwards Bishop of Dunedin—a retreat to the students of Clonliffe Ecclesiastical College of which he was then Rector. Little did I then think that I should be, in the future, the principal agent to bring about his election to the See of Dunedin, and should preach the sermon at his consecration by Cardinal Moran, in St. Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin.

As soon as the question arose of my likely appointment as Coadjutor to Dr. Viard, my superiors withdrew me from the teaching of theology and brought me to Sainte Foy-les-Lyon (Rhône), France, that I might be available when wanted, and that I might have leisure to study the duties of a Bishop. It also gave me the opportunity to recover my command of the French language, which, after I became Bishop of Wellington, I utilised to address large French audiences in various cities, in reference to New Zealand and the Marist Missions generally. I never wrote these addresses or sermons, but only thought them out carefully and then relied on improvisation for their diction, which came fluently without effort.

I received the news of my appointment to the See of Wellington on the 29th of January, 1874, Feast of my Patron, St. Francis of Sales. When, at an earlier date, my Superior General proposed to me his desire to have me elevated to the Episcopate I was staggered; but when, on reflection, I decided that obedience was the best proof of humility and the surest sign of God's will, I accepted the awful dignity and tremendous responsibility, trusting in God and the "Star of the Sea." I had never, as God knows, desired and never asked to return to New Zealand after my profession as a Marist. I put myself entirely into the hands of my superiors to go where they wished and do what they commanded, all the days of my life: my sacrifice of home and country was absolute, and, as far as dependent on me, irrevocable. And thus, in my poor person, was again signally verified the truth of the sacred words: "An obedient man shall speak of victory." (Prov. xxi. 28.)

Archbishop Manning (not yet Cardinal), at my request, most graciously consented to consecrate me in St. Ann's Marist Church, London. I chose myself St. Patrick's Day for the consecration. And why? Because I

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