

CARDINAL GIBBONS: A TRIBUTE TO AMERICA'S GREAT MAN

One of the great men of America has died in Baltimore (says the *Call*, San Francisco, editorially). For a long lifetime he was a leader and adviser of a nation, and history will place him among those precious few whose lives were always guided by sanity and wisdom. Those who look back across the broad sweep of Cardinal Gibbons' life will find a symmetry there that is almost architectural in its simple perfection. From narrow means and obscurity he rose to great distinction by his own energy, ability, and character. He was a grocery boy who became a prince of the Church, and there is something wonderfully appealing to the American spirit in that rise from obscurity to distinction.

James Gibbons knew poverty of the body, but Cardinal Gibbons never knew poverty of the spirit. The same sensitiveness, quiet courage, and charm of personality remained with him through his lifetime. Perhaps some of his strength may be explained by his thoroughly American spirit. There were times in his career when the Cardinal's temper was different from the temper of Rome. But he was one of those rare men who know when to use and when to oppose their environments, and his wisdom was always triumphant.

And yet, though he was a prince of the Church he was not worldly. In the midst of a busy detailed life he retained a simple, all-embracing piety that called him to his devotions for several hours of each day. He was close to the spirit, but he drew the world to his side. When the golden jubilee of his priesthood was celebrated in 1912, Protestant and Catholic joined in praise and respect. At one public meeting President Taft, former President Roosevelt, Ambassador Jusserand of France, and Senator Root were the speakers. And when he took his daily walks in the city of Baltimore it is said that half of the people he passed, on even the busiest streets, paused to salute him. There were power and wisdom and sweetness in Cardinal Gibbons and, though the nation has lost by his death, it will still possess the gains of his living.

RESTORING RHEIMS CATHEDRAL.

In the course of a very interesting address at the French Institute in London M. Pierre Champion recapitulated the stages of the martyrdom of Rheims Cathedral—the tragic fire of 1914, the immense damage suffered by the nave and large pillar, and the smashing in of the roof. Yet, in spite of the disaster, the building must and could be restored; of 2300 statues, 60 only had been destroyed by the enemy; all the open parts of the Cathedral were now protected by an immense corrugated iron roof, while the flagstone pavement had been renewed. An interesting fact was that the old Cathedral of Hincmar had been unearthed by recent excavations, in the course of which a well with leaden conduits had been discovered near the altar. These conduits probably carried water to a baptistery. Could it possibly be the baptistery of Clovis (Hlodwig)? It would take a long time, strenuous efforts, and taste to accomplish the restoration. M. Champion next entered into particulars concerning the restoration of the city, of which 60 hectares (about 150 acres) had been devastated by fire. Lack of funds had caused the work to be suspended for six months. The coffers of the State were empty, and M. Loucheur, who had recently visited the city, had advised it to issue a municipal loan. Were the financial situation a better one, asserted the lecturer, no traces would remain within a couple of years of a field of ruins comparable with those of Pompeii.

ANCIENT MOORISH CIVILISATION.

In the South of Spain, we are told, the weary traveller, after passing many an arid plain and many a bleak, bare hill, finds himself at nightfall under the heights of Grenada, and as he does so he hears the grateful sound of rushing water. It is the sound of the irrigating rivulets called into existence by the Moorish occupants of Grenada five centuries ago, and which amid all the changes of race and religion have never ceased to flow. Their

empire has fallen; their people have been driven from the shores of Spain; their palaces have crumbled into ruins, but this trace of their civilisation still continues. And thus it is that the good they did lives on and bears its own witness, and is a blessing even to their victors.—Rev. W. W. Tulloch, D.D.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

- J. H. O'C.—Historians differ as to the birthplace of St. Patrick. Many hold that he was born in Armorica Gaul, and others that he was born in Scotland, at Dumbarton on Clyde, probably. There is no conclusive evidence one way or other.
- KILDARE.—Catholics certainly do regard a marriage between two Presbyterians as a valid marriage in every sense, provided all the essential formalities are fulfilled. You are right in holding that no Catholic can lawfully or validly marry any married person whose wife (or husband) is still alive. The Catholic Church regards marriage as binding until death separates the parties. "What God hath joined let no man put asunder," represents the true and only tenable Christian view of marriage.
- P. J. O'S. (Oamaru).—Pleased to hear from you again. Somebody mentioned recently that inquiries had been made in Wellington concerning a teacher of the Gaelic language. I am afraid that there is too little enthusiasm in most places to keep a class going.
- M. S. A. (Napier).—We decided that it was better postpone our Irish History Competition until after the mid-winter holidays. Father James O'Neill has donated book prizes for this year and we have invited him to set and examine the papers. As the last Competition covered the period between the coming of St. Patrick and the Norman Invasion we take it the next will begin about the twelfth century. In any case there will be ample notice given.

CORRESPONDENCE

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for opinions expressed by our correspondents.]

TO THE EDITOR. HELP FOR THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF IRELAND.

Sir,—In the *Tablet* issue of the 26th ult. I read the appeal on behalf of the suffering women and children of Ireland. True it was addressed to the American women, but I think New Zealand girls of Irish descent would do well to spare a little to help save the lives of Irish babies. Enclosed subscription is part of a sum I have saved to buy a sewing machine when married, but as that will not be for a while yet I am sending this for the Irish children's fund, chiefly because I have been blessed with a

GOOD IRISH MOTHER.

ALLEGRI'S "MISERERE."

Gregorio Allegri was a contemporary of Shakespere, and a member of the artistic family to which Corregio belonged. The music of his famous "Miserere" was once so jealously guarded that even the singers were forbidden to transcribe the notes, on pain of excommunication. However, Dr. Burney contrived to procure a copy; and Mozart, in his boyhood, wrote down the music from memory after two visits to the Sistine Chapel. But one of the greatest charms of this celebrated composition is said to lie in certain traditional "embellishments" still preserved only by the Pontifical choir. Allegri's life was as lovely as his music. He was the friend of all outcasts, "distinguished by singular gentleness and sweetness of soul"; and he spent his leisure among the prisons and pest-houses of Rome.

No life ever fails, no effort ever falls fruitless, if only the heart is sincere in its love for God and the life consecrated to serve, no matter what hardness or trials may come.