

AN APPRECIATION OF REVEREND DOCTOR MacMILLAN

The Red & White is called upon in this issue to mourn the death of another of our Island Clergy. The Reverend John MacMillan, gifted and talented, wise and witty, passed to his eternal reward on April 18 last. Although not an Alumnus of St. Dunstan's yet he took such an active interest in her intellectual achievements during his priestly career, she may fondly number him as one of her sons by adoption.

Born at Dundas in the year 1862, he early evinced a precocious talent that caused his pastor, the late Reverend Father Francis McDonald, to signal in the boy the evidences of future greatness. Taking him to his own residence he tutored him in the elements of the Classics so far as to enable him to matriculate into Prince of Wales College. There he distinguished himself, leading in every branch of his studies, so that, at the completion of his term, he was deemed fit by his Bishop to enter the Quebec Seminary and prosecute his philosophical and theological courses. The professors of that learned institution of that time now living even yet recall to the passing visitors from the Island the brilliant exploits of Dr. MacMillan in the lists of Theological disputations.

Ordained priest at Quebec on 22nd of December 1888, on his return to this Diocese he was appointed Assistant to his venerable patron Father Francis of saintly memory, where he remained for two years. His fluency in the French language caused the Bishop to give him charge of the Acadian Parish of Palmer Road. Here with indefatigable zeal he laboured for several years, erecting the Church which now stands as a monument to his pastoral devotion. Untiring in exhorting and instructing, at last his frail body could no longer stand the strain, and he was compelled to resign and take a rest from his labors.

Obliged to travel for his health, he continued to store his mind with timely observation of the conditions of the places through which he passed and of the persons with whom he came in contact; so that afterwards his conversations and opinions about men and things became truly interesting and instructive, and in the lecture field he attained a proficiency equalled by few. After a period of rest he was enabled again to resume active duties and was

assigned to the parish of Cardigan, where for over twenty years he labored in season and out of season in the interests of his Divine Master. His exhortations were always listened to with wrapt attention and the cadence of his periods fell like music on the ear.

Notwithstanding the earnestness with which he devoted himself to his priestly labors he yet found time to compile and give to the world works of invaluable worth. His History of the Catholic Church in this Diocese and other works will ever remain proof of his untiring energy in the fields of historical research, and of his literary ability.

At last his frail body could no longer keep pace with his intensely active mind, and he was obliged again to resign his pastoral charge and reside in the quiet of the Charlottetown Hospital, where for several years he attended as chaplain. Few who passed through that institution during that time but will often recall with gratitude the time passed by their bedside in their hours of anguish, bringing them consolation and strength when they needed it most, and when with quick repartee and timely joke he beguiled the days of their convalescence.

During the last year or so his illness deprived him of the consolation of saying Mass, but never a day passed that he did not receive his Divine Master in Holy Communion. In his sickness he was attended with loving care, first by the Grey Nuns and afterwards by the Sisters of St. Martha, who were unremitting in their attentions to him. At last on the 18th of April last the summons came and found him ready and his sweet soul returned to its Creator.

Few will leave after them such kind memories as dear Father MacMillan. Quick at retort, brilliant in conversation, he was indeed an ideal priestly companion, loved by his friends, respected by all who knew him, having no enemies, a true servant of God. We may securely hope and pray that he will obtain that eternal rest in the bosom of his Creator, he so earnestly labored for, and that the earth may lay lightly upon him—*Sit tibi terra levis.*"

If men wish to be held in esteem, they must associate only with those who are estimable.

—*La Bruyere.*