

CHAPTER XII

RT. REV. CHARLES HENRY COLTON, D. D., FOURTH BISHOP OF
BUFFALO—THIRD CHANCELLOR OF NIAGARA UNIVERSITY

THE translation of Bishop Quigley to the archiepiscopal See of Chicago opened a wide field of speculation as to the election of a new Bishop for the See of Buffalo. As usual, the inmates at Niagara, especially those in official position like the Faculty, kept aloof from all participation in the advocacy of any special candidate, content to wait until such time as the Spirit of God would declare through his authoritative mouthpiece who should be selected to rule that special portion of the Church of God embraced by the See of Buffalo.

When in the summer of 1903 the appointment of Rev. Charles Henry Colton of New York was announced throughout the press of the country to succeed Bishop Quigley, Niagara folk were naturally alert to know what manner of man had been selected by the Holy See to be the spiritual head of the diocese in which our institution is located. They soon learned that the "mildness of the crozier," traditional in the diocese of Buffalo from the beginning, was to be continued and even increased through the amiable qualities of the new incumbent. The record which the Bishop-elect had made in the great diocese of New York as Chancellor and as pastor of St. Stephen's parish was more than sufficient guarantee that the fourth Bishop of Buffalo would rule the flock committed to his care with vigilance, suavity, and success.

Some of the present Faculty had had the honor of personal acquaintance with Father Colton when he was the pastor of St. Stephen's in New York, and when he came after his consecration in the Cathedral of that city to take possession of his See of Buffalo he met no more cordial welcome than that extended to him by the priests from Our Lady of Angels.

Those among us who had not previously met the new Bishop soon learned to appreciate the qualities inherent in the man, admiring his zeal, his gentleness, yet withal his episcopal vigor, which leaves it evident to all observers that he alone assumes responsibility for the management of his diocese. From the foot of his newly acquired throne he declared himself all to all that he may gain all to Christ, and the loyal support which he has received from every quarter of his

diocese since that apostolic declaration indicates how Catholics in the See of Buffalo, notwithstanding their cosmopolitan character, are a practical unit in holding up the hands of their anointed leader.

On Thursday, October 15th, the Right Rev. Bishop paid his first visit to Niagara. To quote from the *Index*: "From the moment of his arrival amid the din of the 'Varsity huzzas, and the music of our invincible band, until we waved farewell, Niagara was an elysium of welcome and praise for our distinguished visitor. It is needless to say we are delighted with our new Bishop. We call him ours because we are very intimately connected with his diocese, and now that he has expressed his deep interest in our work and his love for student life, together with his desire to be often in our midst, we feel, as he has won our hearts, that we have become closely intimate with him.

"The programme of welcome participated in by the collegians and seminarians was one as is usual on such occasions, and the trend of our feeling is expressed in the published addresses elsewhere in our columns. But the one thing which aptly showed our loyal feelings towards our new Bishop was the real genuine student outburst of applause which greeted Father Likly's happy introduction of our esteemed guest. Nowhere, indeed, are degrees of appreciation better shown than in a college audience. Our representatives, in voicing our sentiments, received each his due. But when the Bishop arose to address us for the first time, round after round of heartiest applause echoed through the hall. We are sure it was appreciated by the good Bishop who understands so well the spirit of collegians; and if we judge from the Bishop's happy expression, this sincere reception made him feel that he was among the most devoted of friends.

"Buffalo's new Bishop possesses a pleasing personality. His very presence and speech show him a man of high sanctity and simplicity. As a lover of learning and as a tremendous worker he was noted long before he assumed the duties of the episcopate. His heart is wholly in the cause of Christian education, and as he talked to us of student perfection we felt that his interest in our work will spur us on to retain the high place he holds for us in his estimation of our graduates and of our institution's efforts to fit her sons for their avocations. His words of counsel, of warning, and of encouragement are already deep in our hearts. In expressing his great interest in our welfare, his love for our work, and in his promise to be always with us at least in spirit, we feel we have a friend and advocate. We trust our progress in the future will elicit the same approval that the past has done from Bishop Colton's generous words.

"We feel we have the sympathies of our zealous chief pastor and thank him for his coming amongst us — for his words of encouragement, and especially for giving us the pleasure of knowing and honoring him."

The following programme was rendered at the reception tendered to Bishop Colton in Alumni Hall at 8 P. M.

PROGRAMME

Recreation March,	Entre	<i>Rieger</i>
	N. U. Band	
Crown of Beauty,	Waltzes	<i>Bennet</i>
	N. U. Orchestra	
Collegians' Address,		Mr. H. Gerlach
Vocal Solo,	"Then You'll Remember Me"	<i>Balfo</i>
	Mr. John Flanagan	
Seminarians' Address,		Mr. A. Velt
Soko,	Moorish March	<i>Lampe</i>
	N. U. Orchestra	
Faculty Address,		Rev. L. A. Grace, C. M.
Viola Waltzes,		<i>Gustin</i>
	N. U. Orchestra	
Presentation,		Very Rev. W. F. Likly, C. M.
Reply,		Rt. Rev. Charles H. Colton, D. D.
Grand Finale,	"Old Niagara"	<i>Rieger</i>
	Sung by whole assembly, accompanied by N. U. Band	

Music under Direction of
J. Ernest Rieger, Music Doctor.

ADDRESS ON BEHALF OF THE COLLEGIANS TO RT. REV. CHARLES
H. COLTON, D. D., BISHOP OF BUFFALO

"Right Reverend Bishop:

"Your advent to Niagara University is an occasion of sincere joy and real pleasure, for we know and appreciate the fact that you yourself took the initiative of this visit. Many eminent members of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church have visited this institution.

Their receptions were cordial and tender, yet their visits did not call forth the full response that your advent to-day elicits, for we know full well that your kindly visit has a more personal character, a more intimate reference, and a more sympathetic accord.

“Our college, our professors, and ourselves are subject to your spiritual rule and guidance, and the sentiments of love, esteem, and respect dutifully and lovingly offered you, generously spring from the hearts of your spiritual sons. We, the students of the collegiate department, extend to you our best, sincerest, and most cordial greetings. We lovingly welcome you, our spiritual ruler and father. We in a simple manner manifest our sentiments of reverence, respect, love, devotion, and obedience, for we recognize in your person the consecrated representative of our Holy Mother the Church, the good shepherd of the spiritual flock of the diocese of Buffalo.

“From the time His Holiness, Leo XIII., of happy memory, selected you as Bishop of Buffalo, our love and affection naturally turned toward you. Moreover, a sincere and earnest desire took possession of our hearts to see you in person and to tender our sentiments of filial devotion and deep respect. We read with affectionate interest the account of your episcopal consecration, the numerous addresses of justly deserved congratulation offered you on that happy occasion, the grand reception given you on your formal entrance into your diocese. Our religious training impresses upon our minds the lofty dignity to which you have been elevated, the grave responsibility of that dignity, the religious respect due to you. But if we reverence and respect you in your episcopal capacity, we love and esteem you still more devotedly as Bishop of Buffalo.

“The diocese of Buffalo is joined to Niagara and its professors with bonds of love and fond remembrance. The first bishop of Buffalo was the saintly Timon, an exemplary member of the Congregation of the Mission, whose name and works are still in benediction. His successor was the gentle Bishop Ryan, a true imitator of the virtues of Saint Vincent de Paul, and a model churchman. His early labors were connected with this institution; afterwards he was made Provincial of the Congregation of the Mission. Then, at the call of Rome, he accepted the onerous honor of the Episcopal See of Buffalo. His saintly life and noble deeds live after him and need no words of praise. Certainly here are reasons for the love, the gladness, and the joy with which we welcome you to-day.

“There is, however, another bond which unites us more intimately to you. Your worthy and eminent predecessor, the Most Rev. James

Edward Quigley, was a collegian within these walls. It was here he disclosed these remarkable talents that have borne so much fruit in after years. His very name is a grand stimulus to us to improve our minds and to ground ourselves deeply and solidly in virtue and uprightness. When he was chosen Bishop we were glad. We marveled at the master mind with which he ruled his flock. We were honored with his friendly visits, and we mourn his elevation to the Arch-episcopal See of Chicago as our personal loss, but we rejoice because we saw, with delight, that the Holy See knew and appreciated his prudence, his sanctity, and his zeal.

“Assuredly then our love, our reverence, our devotion, our esteem, and our allegiance are generously and devotedly offered to you, his most eminently fitted successor, who comes to our Alma Mater to honor us with your cordial visit. The bond that binds you to the honored names of Timon, Ryan, and Quigley binds us also in a manner not dissimilar. As we love our college in its past and in its present, so we for the same reason love the revered names of Timon, Ryan, and Quigley. Then as we revered and still revere their hallowed names, so we as truly and sincerely pour forth our affections and regards to you on this happy occasion.

“Our college course prepares us for the battles of this life and neglects not the interest of the next. The atmosphere of a Catholic college is religious, unworldly, and spiritual. The pliant mind of the young Catholic boy is molded properly and fittingly. The whole man is educated. The intellect is developed, not at the expense of either of his moral qualities or of his physical powers. Rather all his faculties are developed in perfect harmony. Our Alma Mater has faithfully performed this duty in the past and is ably doing the same at the present time for us. This Catholic education is an object of supreme interest to you. In this we plainly see another bond of mutual love. Your own intelligent interest in the education of the young and your success as an educator in New York emphatically tell us that the educational institutions of your diocese are and will be objects of your enlightened zeal and encouragement. For this age needs educated Catholic men in the professional and business world; men who will bring the good odor of Christ into a world that knows Him not.

“Your virtues and your beautiful qualities of soul are the sweetest bonds that unite us to you in filial love and prompt obedience. Throughout your life you have displayed those splendid qualities of mind and heart that have won for you universal esteem and reverence.

The rich have been your friends and the poor have been your favorites. It was the charity of Christ that urged you to do all the good possible at all times. You were the patient friend and prudent adviser to priest and layman. You have participated in their joys and sorrows. In a word, you were a father kind and indulgent to all. Many were the blessings invoked upon you for your numerous acts of charity and benevolence, and the verdict of all was that you were in truth the most Christ-like priest of the great Archdiocese of New York.

"We do not wish to weary you with your oft told praises, but in the name of the Collegians of Niagara University to offer you again our homage and obedience, to wish you length of days in the administration of the diocese of Buffalo, to express the desire to see you often in our midst, to drink in your words of wisdom poured forth with loving earnestness, to ask your prayers for our college and ourselves, and to promise you, after your noble example, to do all in our power in the future either as priests or laymen to show that the Christian training of our Alma Mater fell not upon ungrateful soil, but that it took deep root and developed in due season and brought forth good fruit.

"This is the time for us to declare openly that we see in you an image of a good shepherd, and we give our thanks to Him, the greatest of Shepherds in Heaven, that he has given us in your person the most amiable, kind, and virtuous, but ever alert and prudent, guardian of that precious pearl the 'Faith of Our Fathers.'

"Therefore, 'Let him be honored whom the King hath in mind to honor.' Would that we could invoke some spirit of eloquence to express the thoughts and feelings of this hour. Your apostolic zeal, combined with inexhaustible Christian patience, is for us, your faithful children, an invaluable blessing in this life. You are a prelate; you may rule now. The mitre is your crown here upon earth, the crosier is your scepter, and you rule not only the external act but even the hearts and affections of the people.

"We rejoice to-day for having in our midst such a distinguished visitor, the blessing of whose presence, like the sunlight, lends brilliancy to the occasion. Again let me in behalf of the collegiate department bid you welcome, and as a favor we ask you to bestow upon us your episcopal blessing. May the Heavenly Spirits form your faithful guard, ever hover near, to assist you in your exalted functions, and may kind Heaven bless you with continued health and strength, that your administration may prove long, happy, and prosperous."

ADDRESS ON BEHALF OF SEMINARIANS

“Right Reverend and Beloved Bishop:

“On behalf of the seminarians of Our Lady of Angels, I bid you heartfelt welcome to our Seminary home. At length, after anxious expectations, we are permitted to look upon our chief pastor, the Bishop of our diocese, to call him our guest as well as our Father in Christ, and to present to him in person those pledges of devotion which every aspirant to the ecclesiastical state is taught to hold as chief among his obligations.

“Our joy at the announcement of your coming, dear Bishop, was tempered, we admit, by fear, lest our preparations for your reception would not be commensurate with your dignity as a mitred prelate of the Church. Our memories are still fresh with the whole-souled triumphal ovations of which you were the recipient in the great city of New York and in your own episcopal city of Buffalo. We rejoice at the great tribute of esteem bestowed upon you by both clergy and laity, and we are filled with admiration and respect at the thought of having as our Bishop a man of God who is the happy possessor of the confidence of all his subjects. Tributes the most kindly have enriched the halo of your name, and by us who are so easily pleased by the fame of those whom we love and admire, this mark of reverence is treasured as a pearl of priceless value.

“That seminarians here abiding amid nature’s solitude should hope to make a gorgeous holiday with cloth of gold or banners floating gaily, or music, or the military, or wealth, or beauty, to herald your coming to our halls, might have been our dreams, indeed, and would be our delight thus to honor him whom the Prince of Bishops hath honored. But we have taken courage in spite of our meager opportunities for display by taking refuge in that which the poor find as potent as the wealthy.

“In compensation we offer you, dear Bishop, the welcome of grateful, joyous, and loyal hearts. We behold in you one who has come to us as our chief teacher, on whose gentle brow has been placed the mitre of authority by command of the supreme Pontiff himself. Apart from the endearing personality which you possess and which is a happy augury for the seminarians of your diocese, we realize that as our Bishop you are entitled to our reverence, our love, our exact obedience, our prayers, too, that the heavy burden of the episcopacy may be borne by you without faltering until the years allotted to you shall have been accomplished.

“Short has been your sojourn in this diocese, but the loving

fealty manifested everywhere in truth foreshadows a great future. Your characteristic goodness has already captivated the hearts of your subjects, and will insure unswerving loyalty. Many years have you spent in the vineyard of the Lord, and at His bidding you have now been raised to the episcopal state. May He continue to shower the plenitude of His grace upon you, preserving you long as our spiritual father.

“We who have the honor of adoption in your diocese feel that we belong in an especial manner to your household; that you have for us, the youngest members of your clerical family, the solicitude which marks the tender parent. And this relation of our Bishop towards us fills us with hopefulness, inspires us with eminent courage to prosecute our studies, to improve in piety, to adorn ourselves with all qualities befitting ecclesiastics. We have forsaken the world, parted with its pleasures and followed the call of the Master. We have heeded his counsel, left parents and friends, and followed in His footsteps. Well do we remember the memorable words of the Lord: ‘You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you’; and mindful of the admonition we tremble lest our side of the scales be found too light. Our daily prayers and studies, our readiness to heed the voice of authority all augur well in our favor, but with fear and trembling we advance, seeking the paths of light and the footprints of the saints.

“Our parents and friends little suspect our trials; seminary life to them is a sort of premature Heaven, a place of bliss and bounty. While our former fellow students are carving their careers in life, while they advance in their profession, while they count as factors in civic life, we in solitude are grinding fine the grains of wisdom in philosophy and theology. While they are making their fortune we are quietly, slowly but surely storing up the fundamentals of our future career. While they enjoy the realization of their hopes we are patiently climbing Horeb, the mountain of God, and only after long, persistent, and unswerving perseverance shall we reach the top.

“A visit like this is a ray of sunshine in our lives. We cherish it and hold it in memory dear. We never fail to appreciate its worth, and often refer to it with feelings of delight. We have enlisted as soldiers of Christ and for His sake try to bear our trials with joy and pleasure. And when, by the grace of God, your episcopal hands shall rest upon our heads, when the voice of authority shall consecrate us irrevocably to the service of the Most High, we shall renew the pledge of obedience so cheerfully given on this occasion.

“Little do we know what Providence holds in the embrace of the future. Your station in life, dear Bishop, is one of eminence; to you look thousands of grieving hearts for comfort and redress. And when trials inseparable from one in your exalted position come upon you, may Christ the High Priest be your refuge and consolation; may His Mother, Our Lady of Angels, sustain you as her well beloved client unto the perfect end.”

ON BEHALF OF THE FACULTY

“Right Reverend and Beloved Bishop:

“Exuberant youth typified by the inmates of Niagara’s study hall has been alert as usual, and through its representative has been the first formally to address you on this joyful occasion. The senior body has followed, expressing sentiments ‘whose words all ears took captive.’ What remains for me, speaking in behalf of our faculty, to add as a compliment to the tributes which have just been paid to you, Right Reverend Bishop, by the student members of Niagara’s household? Indeed, I feel like saying with melancholy Hamlet that they have plucked out the heart of my mystery.

“I will not indulge in adulation; you would not have it. Were I to take refuge in what Swift calls ‘the food of fools’ I might well expect to hear your gentle voice reproving me: ‘I come not to hear such flattery, sir, and in my presence.’ I dare not transform myself into a prophet and proclaim for the Fourth Bishop of Buffalo a long, a roseate, an illustrious episcopacy, although God knows I wish it from the depths of my heart, as we all do, and I even pause to pray that I have spoken better than I know.

“To us, dear Bishop, as to yourself, the future is a sealed book, but its keeping is in the hands of the Great Shepherd, and we may trust to Him that when the pages of your Episcopacy are written the ‘golden clasps will lock a golden story.’ But I may be permitted, I hope, to turn from that which is hidden to that which is manifest, scanning for awhile the horizon of the past.

“It is a far cry, if you will, from 1903 to 1856 when the first Bishop of Buffalo invited the Vincentian Fathers to erect an ecclesiastical seminary in his newly-formed diocese. From the days of Bishop Timon to those of your immediate predecessor, the present Most Reverend Archbishop of Chicago, the College and Seminary of Our Lady of Angels has been favored and encouraged by episcopal support. During nearly half a century it has been the privilege and the consolation of Saint Vincent de Paul’s children conducting this institution

to train levites for the Sanctuary, to equip with suitable knowledge and piety under God those whom the Great High Priest had set apart to offer the clean and acceptable oblation.

“Nearly every diocese in the United States and not a few in Canada have numbered among their clerical forces soldiers of the Cross who were trained for their spiritual warfare at the shrine of Our Lady of Angels. The lovely diocese over which the Holy Ghost has appointed you to rule has felt during all these years the helpful effects of a work so dear to the heart of Holy Mother Church as is that of educating ecclesiastics. The Faculties of Niagara from the beginning till now, impressed with the warning of their Father Vincent, have ever been solicitous to meet the wishes of the illustrious prelates whose seminarians had been entrusted to their keeping.

“It is not my place or my wish to enumerate the successes which may have crowned the labors of Saint Vincent’s sons in the sacred task of providing worthy subjects for the sanctuary. I would only accentuate the fact that our endeavors to follow the lines laid down by him whom God raised up in the 17th century ‘for the salvation of the poor and the discipline of the clergy’—*ad salutem pauperum et cleri disciplinam*—have met with episcopal approval, cordial, generous, and to us most encouraging to contemplate. Our relations with the Right Reverend Bishops of Buffalo have always been of a nature to sustain us in the prosecution of a work which was not always, indeed, as comfortably established as we of the present find it.

“Forty-six years ago the beginning was made, humbly as are most things done in the name of God, quietly as becomes a work which has God for its principal object, in poverty as are most of the projects undertaken for the furtherance of our Religion. The Founder of our institution was Father John Lynch, C. M., afterwards the first Archbishop of Toronto. In an address which he delivered here during our Silver Jubilee in 1881 he attributed the work as done by God, since it could not have been carried on by the weak hands of men: ‘*A Domino factum est istud,*’ he exclaims, ‘*et est mirabile in oculis nostris.*’

“Yet he does not neglect to tell us how through the advice of the first Bishop of your See a priest of the diocese of Brooklyn was induced to donate \$10,000 to our struggling seminary lest the property bought, but not paid for, might revert to the original owners. And when legal complications ensued so that the donation could not be secured, we are told how another Prelate, the revered Bishop Lough-

lin of Brooklyn, cut the gordian knot of litigation, sending the money forthwith to the impoverished seminary.

“When the fire fiend assailed us in 1864, sweeping away all that had been built up with so much toil, it was the first Bishop of Buffalo who came to our rescue with all that fatherly and practical support within episcopal command. He enlisted in behalf of our seminary the sympathies of so great a personage as Pius IX., whose generous donation testified to the zeal of that great Pontiff for the maintenance of ecclesiastical institutions.

“When Bishop Ryan took up the crozier laid down by his saintly confrere, he assumed towards Our Lady of Angels an attitude which made us feel that our work was appreciated by Buffalo’s chief Pastor, not only in the seminary but also in the collegiate department. For, when in 1883 a number of Buffalo’s best physicians, seeking to elevate the then unsatisfactory condition of medicine as a study, appealed to Bishop Ryan for co-operation, he advised them to affiliate themselves as a special school under the trustees of our institution. Concordant with his wishes we changed our legal title from College and Seminary of Our Lady of Angels to that of Niagara University, that this school of medicine, and later on a Buffalo Law School, might find legal existence under our new and enlarged charter.

“The Bishop of this diocese advised us to enlarge our sphere, and we obeyed him, even though some among our friends, not understanding our motive, arraigned us on the score of departing from our primitive spirit. The wisdom of the Bishop’s advice that we co-operate in the demand for a better preliminary training in the study of medicine was vindicated when the legislature of this State made compulsory the four years’ course inaugurated by the Niagara medical college.

“After 28 years of apostolic labor, Buffalo’s second Bishop dies the death of the just, mourned by his flock, regretted by his fellow citizens of all creeds, lamented by the little household of Niagara under whose cross-crowned roof he had ordained so many to the priesthood. When his young and vigorous successor was announced Niagara rejoiced that one who had been an inmate of her study hall should be raised to the purple and should become our Bishop.

“The advent of Bishop Quigley to the See of Buffalo was followed by the continuance of those pleasant relations which in the past had been so effective in enabling our institution to carry out the purposes of its existence. And when, after six years of gentle, amiable and effective rule, he was called to another sphere of action, solici-

tude for the future was mingled, we confess, with our prayers (which have been answered) that the Holy Ghost might provide a worthy incumbent for the vacant bishopric of Buffalo.

“And why, dear Bishop, have I recounted, perhaps at tedious length, these incidents in the life of our institution? To illustrate how its presidents from Father Lynch to Father Likly have endeavored with the assistance of their brethren to train clerics according to the pattern cut out for them by their saintly Father, Vincent de Paul. Adherence to his wise counsels, to his plain commands, will result under God in the production of priests whose learning, piety, and zeal will be regulated by the all necessary virtue of obedience to their episcopal superiors. A learned priest may prove a rock of scandal, a zealous priest may merge into the ways of schism, but an obedient priest shall speak victories.

“May we ask you, dear Bishop, to trust us, to confide in us, to accept the love and loyalty of Niagara’s Faculty, to lend us your fatherly support, that our devotion to you and the interests of your diocese may find scope now as under your illustrious predecessors in the prosecution of that which is dearest to a Bishop’s heart,—the training of ecclesiastical students?

Respectfully and devotedly,

NIAGARA’S FACULTY, ’03-’04.

RT. REV. CHARLES H. COLTON, D. D.,

Bishop of Buffalo.

Niagara University, N. Y., Oct. 15, 1903.”

Since this memorable occasion when the inmates of Niagara were afforded an opportunity to express their sentiments towards the Right Rev. Bishop of Buffalo we have received only kindness and consideration at his hands. With much personal inconvenience he has frequently accepted our invitations to assist at functions, the nature of which did not, indeed, exact his attendance, but the success of which was certain to be enhanced by his episcopal presence.

A proof of his willingness to co-operate with us in our undertakings is his acceptance of the office of Chancellor of the University, not merely as an *ex-officio* title belonging to his episcopal position, but as one enabling him to work more intimately with the priests of Niagara in their efforts for Catholic higher education. His seal of approval on our previous efforts in this direction may be said to have been given when on the occasion of our Alumni meeting at Niagara

last November he graciously consented to become an honorary member of that much-prized organization.

Bishop Colton's likeness adorns the front pages of this volume which we have dedicated with so much affection to those who taught within these walls, to those who studied here, who went forth during half a century the better equipped for having tarried at this fount of Christian knowledge. His gentle face looks out upon the record of fifty years, whose golden sheaves now harvested in the storehouse of this history were planted, nurtured, and matured under the eyes of his illustrious predecessors by the pioneer priests of Niagara:

"Euntes ibant et flebant, mittentes semina sua."

To-day, although the harvest of half a century has been gathered, the planting must still go on. Under the blessing of God, the protection of Our Lady of Angels, and the generous encouragement of the fourth Bishop of Buffalo may the prophecy long hold true of us and our successors:

"Venientes autem venient cum exultatione: portantes manipulos suos."