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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7.

CURRENT COMMENT.

A Literary Feat. Our friend, Dr. Thomas O'Hagan, whose literary achievements we sketched in the REVIEW at the beginning of this year, has contributed to the Catholic World of September an article on "Some Canadian Women Writers," which is a veritable 'tour de force.' In the compass of seventeen pages he has managed to speak, with judicial discrimination and generally with critical praise, of no less than forty-six women who have earned literary celebrity in Canada. Twenty-nine of these are represented by strikingly good portraits. The description of so large a portrait gallery in such limited space would, in any other hands, have been as dry as a catalogue and as monotonous as a dictionary; but the skilful writer has so deftly handled the gems of his mosaic that no two are quite similar, and the general effect is most pleasing. The reader rises from the perusal of this article with full assent to Dr. O'Hagan's proposition, viz., that "the literary expression of Canada is poetic, and the literary genius of her daughters for the present is growing verseward. Canada has produced more genuine poetry during the past decade of years than any other country of the same population in the world."

Regina But Not Winnipeg. Several of these distinguished ladies are Catholics. Of Mrs. Leprohon in particular we are told that "she did perhaps more than any other Canadian writer to foster and promote the growth of a national literature." Of course, the learned Doctor refers only to those who wrote in English and does not include in his generalization the broad field of French Canadian literature. "One of her novels, Antoinette de Mirecourt," which, by the way, long since won the honor of translation into French, "is regarded by many as one of the best Canadian novels yet written. Simplicity and grace mark her productions in verse. Mrs. Leprohon lived in Montreal and did her best work in the 'fifties.'" Dr. O'Hagan thus writes of one who is nearer to our own time and place: "Far out on the prairie from the town of Regina, the capital of the Canadian North-west Territories, has recently come a voice fresh and strong. Kate Hayes knows well how to embody in a poem something of the rough life and atmosphere found in the prairie settlements of the West. Her poem "Rough Ben" is certainly unique of its kind. Miss Hayes has also in collaboration composed a number of excellent songs." Alas! that Winnipeg should be less favored than Regina. And yet had we not ample proof in last year's Free Kindergarten Magazine that the capital of Manitoba holds many a graceful female pen? No doubt Dr. O'Hagan, if he ever flit hitherward,

will crave pardon of Winnipeg's women writers for having failed to notice any of them in his otherwise interesting gallery. Else let him look to his laurels.

The Globe Review. Mr. William Henry Thorne's third quarterly number for this year is just out. However much one may disagree with some of his views, whatever he writes is interesting and often very suggestive. He is pre-eminently a free lance in Catholic literature and like the knight-errants of old is not to be held too strictly accountable for his occasional errors of zeal. The personal element is very strong in Mr. Thorne and, as it has never been properly toned down by a college or university education, it crops up everywhere and often supplies the place of argument. For a man of Mr. Thorne's temperament it is an irreparable misfortune not to have been submitted in his youth to that friction of mind with mind which teaches a man his shortcomings and schools him in modesty. Very likely Carlyle was just as self-opinionated as Mr. Thorne; but the autocratic Thomas had studied in Edinburgh amid a host of literary lights and his imperiousness was so far checked that he preferred affirmation in the third person to Mr. Thorne's ever-recurring "I." It is this mania for obtruding his own personality that has made the Casket call him an "insufferable egotist who wants to run the Catholic Church."

Insufferable, no; amusing, yes. His very egotism lends an interest to his Quarterly which is singularly lacking in such encyclopedic salmagundis as Mr. Stead's Review of Reviews. After reading the latter, you put it down with your mind in a state of incipient chaos, utterly barren of ideas, whereas the Globe Quarterly either antagonizes or chimes in with all one's pet notions and set one's brain machinery in healthy motion. The September number, out of sixteen articles, contains as many as seven from the editor's trenchant pen. The first paper is an unnecessarily violent answer to "Sycophant critics of the Globe Review." Calling names is not a really forcible style of reply. Much more effective is such a sentence as the following: "After consulting with archbishops, monks and priests who had already grown interested in the Globe even previous to my reception into the Church, they all, to a man, earnestly advised me to continue the Globe on its old lines of independent and higher criticism, only—as I had voluntarily resolved—that henceforth, when it treated of religious problems, it would be loyal to the Catholic Church; but that did not and does not mean loyalty to the cranks who misrepresent it."

Christless Churches. Though all Mr. Thorne's deliverances are stimulating, perhaps the sanest in this issue is "Protestant and Catholic Churches," which points out very graphically the eternal difference between an heretical temple bereft of the Sacramental Presence and a real church with its tabernacle and the Body of Christ. The writer relates how last year, when visiting an old Protestant Episcopal church in New England, he felt deeply that "the divine and mystic presence of the Lord was not there, and my heart sank within me, as I turned from the so-called altar to the door, and sought the clearer temple of God's own cloudless sky; and were it again a choice in my life between Protestant churches and the woods, I think I should take to the woods."

Mexican Prosperity. Mr. Robert J. Mahon pointed out, in the Catholic World, of last month, one good result of the conflict between gold and silver now raging south of our boundary. "The bitter controversies of pretended religious bias are for once wholly futile. A man's creed can have so little touch

with the issue of a monetary standard that it would be little better than sheer lunacy to urge its application." But there is more. The champions of the silver standard are non seized with an unusually enlightened interest in Mexican affairs. Hitherto the silver-producing and silver-using republic was generally despised by our neighbors because it is overwhelmingly Catholic. At the present moment prejudice is swamped by an eager search for campaign facts. The Examiner of San Francisco secured, a fortnight since, a letter from President Porfirio Diaz, maintaining that his country is more prosperous under the silver money standard than it could be under a gold standard. The same paper, in its issue of September 27th, gives prominence to another letter from a Mr. Ingolsby, of Monterey, Mexico, in which he says: "Mexico has no tramps; her laborers are all employed, and their condition will compare favorably with that of the operatives of the large manufacturing towns of the Eastern States.... Agricultural products are high, corn being worth from \$1.50 to \$2 a hundred, barley about the same price.... No railroad in Mexico is to-day in the hands of receiver, and a Pullman berth costs but \$2 in silver (one dollar in gold)." Whatever may be the bearing of these facts on the question of bimetallism, at any rate they furnish a curious commentary on the theory that Protestantism alone can make a country prosperous.

HOW TO MAKE IRELAND PROSPEROUS.

Hope is dawning at last for dear, down-trodden Ireland. The Hon. Horace Plunkett, M. P., has formed a committee to create in every Irish parish a centre of life for purposes of co-operation and social and industrial amelioration. Extreme Nationalists like John Redmond sit side by side with thoroughgoing Unionists like Lord Monteagle. Staunch Presbyterians from Belfast join in amicable discussion with Monsignor Molloy and Father T. A. Finlay, S. J. The Recess Committee report that they sought to trace Ireland's industrial shortcomings and commercial disadvantages to their more direct causes. Then they sent special commissioners to France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Austria, Hungary and Switzerland, to inquire into the methods of development in each of these countries. Having received their reports, they proceeded to evolve from a careful study of them all a scheme upon which they could agree as embodying that which was most likely to heal the ills of which Ireland complains. "It is significant," says the Review of Reviews, "that all the members of this Committee—Tory, Liberal, Nationalist, Parcellite, Catholic and Presbyterian—have found no difficulty in agreeing as to what ought to be done, as to what can be done, and in formulating their proposals in such terms as to make them perfectly clear to every one who pays any attention to the subject in both England and Ireland." They found that a better system of cultivation of the soil could easily double the agricultural produce of Ireland and thus add a hundred million pounds sterling to her present revenue. Let us halve this estimate; then Ireland would be benefited to the extent of fifty millions sterling a year. This would stop the constant decrease in population, which has gone on steadily since 1841. At that date Ireland had 8,000,000 inhabitants. Owing to the famine and consequent exodus to our shores, that figure shrank in ten years to 6,500,000. This year the population is almost two millions lower than it was in 1851. Mr. Stead says: "There is no getting round that deadly record of accomplished failure: Ireland is bleeding to death under our feet.... For the last thirty years we have been taxing Ireland two millions a year in excess of what justice demands. And this is not the wild and frantic record of excited Nationalists or fanatical Home Rulers, it is the deliberate finding of Unionist historians, Unionist statesmen, British financiers, and a Finance Committee presided over by a Unionist M. P. Two millions a year ex-

orted by the predominant partner from his junior by force majeure, against his continuous protests, goes far to account for a drop of two millions in the population... How can we choke that leak? How can we arrest that perpetual decrease in the population, which threatens, unless something can be done, to convert Ireland into a cattle ranch, in which great herds may be tended by a few cowboys, who would alone remain to represent the nation which through the centuries has played so pathetic and tragic a part in the affairs of the world."

The Recess Committee answers by statistics about flax, butter, bacon and beef, eggs, flowers and fruit, afforestation or forest-growing, land reclamation, water power, basket-making and cottage trades. The report is most suggestive and eminently practical. It reckons that Ireland buys from the foreigner articles to the value of a hundred millions a year, all of which could be supplied by the Irish if they were but properly trained to utilize their enormous natural advantages. By local organization and instruction through experts, the Irish people would acquire, each in their own locality, more of that cohesiveness and concerted action which will enable them to act effectively in political matters. Thus the recommendations of the Recess Committee, if carried out, will not only restore prosperity to Ireland but also remove by the irresistible evidence of practical success the chief objections to Home Rule.

SCRIP FRAUDS.

The venerable and devoted missionary, the warmest friend of the Half-breeds, Rev. Father Lacombe, O.M.I., has taken up the cudgels in their defence in the Free Press of last Thursday. We are glad to see that his timely exposure of an unblushing fraud has been vigorously endorsed by the editor of our great daily. It will be remembered that scrip, representing either 160 or 240 acres of land according as it was attributed to parents or children, was issued to the half-breeds by way of compensation prior to 1885. This scrip was afterwards made to represent cash and, only a few years ago, was to be found freely circulating in the money market, generally far below its face value. Of late a rumor has been industriously spread abroad that the Dominion Government contemplated a second issue of scrip to the half-breeds of the Northwest. Whether or not this rumor has a substantial basis of probable fact, we cannot say, though we are inclined to think that the Free Press is too positive in its assertion that no more scrip will be issued. It is not likely that the designing speculators who drew up the power of attorney reproduced by us would have gone to the expense of paying for it, as several of them have done, unless they had some reason to expect a rich return for their outlay.

Their method is this. They choose for their territory the outlying regions of the Northwest where half-breeds predominate, such places, for instance, as L'ile a la Crosse, sufficiently remote to enable them to escape detection for a time. Then they approach needy half-breeds with the categorical assurance that the Dominion Government is about to issue new scrip for their especial benefit. The premier, being a French Canadian and therefore presumably partial to Frenchmetis, will be sure, they say, to get this measure passed. Next comes the bargain: "If you sign this power of attorney, I will give you ten dollars now and ninety dollars when you receive your scrip." The offer of ten dollars in cash is simply irresistible for too many impecunious half-breeds and so they sell their birthright for a trifle and the promise of a larger sum from irresponsible and insolvent sharpers. Even if the latter were ultimately to pay the full sum bargained for, viz., a hundred dollars, they would still make a profit of 140 per cent. in the case of children's scrip, which represents \$240.

Father Lacombe was fortunate enough to obtain one of these blank powers of attorney. We have seen the

original and can testify that the blanks in the printed form are filled in with the names of a halfbreed parent, his son and the witness to the transaction, the latter being evidently the person who filled up the blanks, as this halfbreed could not write. By this document a halfbreed father yields up all the rights of his son to "all grants of land, scrip, money or other compensation now due" "unto his said attorney." But the blank reserved for the attorney's name remains a blank. Thus any designing trickster, dealing with an illiterate halfbreed, could insert in that blank any name he chose and the person therein named would alone be "entitled to receive said land, scrip, money or other compensation."

Of course the whole transaction constitutes a transparent fraud and could constructively be brought under the criminal charge of obtaining money under false pretences. Father Lacombe says that over a thousand similar documents have been signed by unsuspecting halfbreeds. It seems the sharpers had formed a combine to get possession of a large tract of land by piecing together the quarter-sections or three-eighths-sections represented by the scrip. But, thanks to Father Lacombe's opportune interference on behalf of his friends, there is every reason to believe that the fraud will cease instanter. The light of day will drive away the land-sharks. All hope of victimizing the half-breeds is henceforth at an end for them. Being forewarned, the prospective victims, who are keen and shrewd when once alive to the situation, will be thoroughly forearmed. They owe their venerable protector a debt of undying gratitude for his prompt exposure of this barefaced trick. Others too, who, with the best intentions, were misled into abetting the efforts of the sharpers, whom they had mistaken for honest men, will no doubt set to work to disabuse the halfbreeds and warn them against delivering any such documents to unknown persons.

A PRESENTATION.

The Rev. Father McCarthy, O. M. I., left Monday on a trip to his native home in Ireland, and last Sunday evening was given a send-off which spoke most eloquently of the hold he has on the affections of the parish. At the close of the regular evening service he was called to the sanctuary rail, when Dr. J. K. Barrett stepped forward and on behalf of the parishioners read the following address:

Rev. Joseph McCarthy, O. M. I., St. Mary's church, Winnipeg.
Rev. and Dear Father,—When the parishioners of St. Mary's church learned, from the lips of their reverend pastor, that you were about to leave us for a short time to pay a visit to the land of your birth, they at once determined that they could not allow the occasion to pass without giving expression to the high esteem, reverence and gratitude which they all entertain for you. Thirty-four years ago, fired with that apostolic zeal which has ever brightly burned in the hearts of the Irish race, you left parents and friends and the dear "Island of Saints and scholars" to help to evangelize this great Northwest. To understand and properly appreciate the magnitude of this undertaking we must carry ourselves back in imagination to the time when this country was not enjoying the civilizing benefits of the present day. The birch bark canoe of the missionary father has been succeeded by the luxurious sleeper of the C. P. R. A toilsome and a weary journey of two or three months, exposed to all kinds of hardships may now be made over our magnificent national highway in as many days. That you have braved all these hardships and labors in the cause of religion, and never faltered in the path of duty, we have the testimony, of that great apostle of the Northwest, the late revered and deeply lamented Archbishop Tache. All these labors and hardships, humbly and unostentatiously undertaken in so noble a cause have made your name revered wherever you are known, but to the Catholics of St. Mary's church there are yet stronger ties of union between us. We hail in you, reverend father, the founder and first pastor of this magnificent and thriving parish. To you belongs the honor of sowing that first little mustard seed, which, under the blessings of God, has grown into the luxuriant and wide-spreading tree from whose canopy we, tonight, address you. In a few more weeks our beloved archbishop will bless for divine worship the new addition to our parish church. When this is done the little mustard seed which you so lovingly sowed in June, 1869, will have grown into the largest and most magnificent temple dedicated to the honor and glory of God in this great Northwest.