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THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 1895.

## Calendar for the Week.

Jan. 25 Conversion of St. Paul.  
26 St. Polycarp.  
27 Feast of Holy Family.  
28 St. John Chrysostom.  
29 St. Francis de Sales.  
30 St. Felix.  
31 St. Peter Nolasco.

## The New French President.

The fact of the lately elected President of the French Republic being a Protestant by profession has given rise to varied discussions in the press and among political circles in England and America. In both those nations, the overwhelming majority being non Catholic, the election of a President or the proclamation of a monarch of the Catholic faith is an utter impossibility. In England the sovereign is obliged to make oath of allegiance not only to the observance of the constitution of the realm, but also to the maintenance of the Protestant religion, and to a solemn declaration of sincere and conscientious attachment to all its principles and teachings whatever these may be.

There are certain oath-bound secret societies, Orangeism for instance, whose members insist upon the Sovereign being professedly of the Protestant Faith, and not only that, but they swear also, that should the King or Queen for conscientious or other motives turn Catholic or cease to maintain Protestant ascendancy in Ireland and a *tertium* in England, they would forswear their allegiance and consider themselves justified in rebelling against the royal authority and person. In the United States no Religious Test-oath is required of the newly elected President, but bigotry is yet so rampant and so widespread in that free republic, that a man or patriot of Catholic convictions and practice would not have a ghost of chance of securing a majority on the day of election.

It appears from the announcement of the nation's choice of Francis Felix Faure as President of the great French Republic that no such law or objection obtains in France. Some of our contemporaries express their astonishment at such toleration on the part of the French people. Others attribute the fact to the progress of liberal ideas and to the advancement in the ways of toleration by the Catholic masses of the French population. Mr. Faure is Protestant say they, but the number of his co-religionists in that country is only about three quarters of million in a total population of 30,000,000. Indeed the Roman Catholic population is almost 80 per cent. of the total. "It appears that not since the days of Henry IV., away back in the sixteenth century has the head of the Government of France been a Protestant."

In the political turmoil and constant change of cabinets and Presidents in the French capital, it really does not seem to matter very much what party has gained or lost, or what figurehead stands before the people as holding power from on high. All power is from God, and all Catholics are taught to obey the civil authority not for "wrath indeed but for conscience sake." However reprehensible and open for criticism French laws may be, there is one grand principle in the nation's ruling that England and America must sooner or later adopt, viz. that no man's religion should debar him from power or position of trust in the service of his country.

Of all the presidents and party leaders that have risen to eminence in France during the last quarter of a century, Marshal McMahon alone was a practical Catholic. Messrs. Thiers, Greevy and Carnot were, no doubt, born and brought up as Catholics. But if their practices of daily life and their public acts are considered, they might as well have been heathens or Hottentots. They allowed the most objectionable and odious laws to be enacted and put in force against the Church, of which their wives, perhaps, and children were devout members. Ferry, Gambetta and Boulanger were no better. Gambetta, the most eloquent orator, was for a short time the people's idol. But he declared open war against the Church and caused the word *clericalism* to bring Christian morals and teachings into disfavor with the masses. He drove the recluses from their monasteries, banished the cross from every school and the name of God from every text book. Gambetta and Boulanger died miserable, disgraceful and premature deaths. In the midst of such heathenish legislation by so called Catholics, or rather, fiendish apostates, an honest Protestant or a sincere Christian of any denomination is a God send. But Mr. Faure, be he Protestant or Catholic, will command the respectful obedience of all true men who love their country and serve their God. Henry IV., King of France, changed his religious views and convictions with mature deliberation, and after long consultation with Protestant and Catholic divines. The story is told of him, that he sent for a leading Protestant Minister of his day and asked him to say on his word of honor, if a man could save his soul in the Catholic Church, to which the Minister replied: most certainly he can. The King then called a Catholic Bishop and asked him the same question, to which the Bishop replied: most certainly he can, and ought to. You all agree, said the King, that I can be saved in the Catholic Church? Then in the name of God, I will join it.

According to the historian Rhorbacher, King Henry IV. treated his abjuration of the Huguenot faith far more seriously and with much solemnity. He says:

On the 23rd of July the King sent for the Archbishop of Bourges, the Bishops of Nantes and of Maine and the Bishop-elect of Evreux, Mgr. Duperron, and conversed with them on the important affair of his conversion. He explained to them his state of mind and the several points on which

he required satisfactory explanations. The Bishops discoursed with him frankly, solving all his doubts and perplexities. The conference lasted fully five hours, at the end of which King Henry acknowledged himself perfectly satisfied and willing to sign his profession of faith in the Catholic Church. Two days afterwards, the King's abjuration was solemnly made in the Church of St. Denis 25th July, 1593.

On bended knees King Henry IV. made his professions as follows: I declare and vow in the presence of God all powerful, that I will live and die in the Roman Catholic and Apostolic religion, that renouncing all heresies I will protect and defend against all the same Catholic Roman Apostolic Faith at the peril of my blood and of my life.

It may be objected that Henry IV. changed his religious views through wise policy and that he never was a Catholic at heart. All must confess, however, that it was very good policy for him to be of the same religious belief and practice as twenty-five millions of his subjects, especially seeing that the Huguenots whom he left were a disturbing element, and at war with their monarch and their Catholic fellow countrymen. Henry IV. had honesty and bravery for his distinguishing characteristics; he was most popular and most beloved of all the French Kings. It is scarcely credible that he would belie all his good acts and sully his grand record for truth and manliness by perjuring himself before God's altar on the day of his solemn abjuration. It was the same King Henry who issued the Edict of Nantes allowing liberty of worship to all Huguenots and Calvinists and granting them unusual immunities and privileges in the cities of Bordeaux and La Rochelle. Would that Queen Elizabeth, who then reigned in England, imitated his example and ceased to persecute for conscience sake.

It was King Henry IV. who prayed that he would live to see the day when every French peasant would have his *poulet au pot* or meat for dinner every day in the year except Friday.

## The Late Cornelius Donovan.

The life of the Inspector of Separate Schools who died during the past week was one from which the young Catholics over whom he was placed may well draw wholesome inspiration. He made his own way by dint of sheer ability and constant application to study. He began as a printer's boy; he taught school for awhile; without attending the exercises of the University he took his degree; he attained to a considerable fame as a writer and as a scholar; and when he was appointed to the position of Inspector of Schools, the appointment was received with general satisfaction. An admitted fitness for the post seemed to commend him to the good will of every one. By students he was held in high esteem by reason of the eminent fairness of his mind. His examination papers were always well within the scope of work prescribed for study.

In the great task of placing the standard of Separate School education at its present height much of the

work of systematizing and directing fell to the inspectors. To say that this work has been faithfully and wisely done is after all the highest praise that can be awarded. Let one's best sincerely and conscientiously whatever be the work in hand accomplish the highest requirements of duty.

## The Ethics of Production.

Doubtless we are all familiar with the method of the Frenchman who copied Demosthenes' advice about action as the first requisite of oratory by advocating boldness, always boldness as the secret of success. There is another process highly recommended: "Always do that which you are afraid to." A much more attractive way to look difficulties in the face and pass by. An example of this latter order of tactics appeared in last week's issue of Saturday Night. Says Don:

"The Manitoba School Act is looming again and is just as welcome on one side of politics as on the other. Neither broad politicians care to toy with this disturbing feature. It is bundled into our midst and is not to become a feature in our general elections, not because the people of Canada want to chew the rag of dissension, but because the reverend gentlemen at the head of an ancient and powerful Church propose to have what they want or raise a row."

It is questionable which of the sections referred to in this extract will feel most flattered. It is scarcely the highest criticism which consigns a discussion of public affairs into the two categories of "broods of politicians" and people who "chew the rag of dissension." A more dignified estimate, and one which in part offsets this rather wholesale contempt for people who have views on public matters appears later, as thus:

"I think I speak for the citizens of this country generally when I say we would thank persons and prelates to be kind enough to keep their creeds out of our political hall."

This lays the flatteringunction rather near to the soul.

"As a politician once said in Illinois when addressing a temperance audience, 'It would be better in this state if we raised more hog and less hell.'"

One of the requisites of a proverb is that it express a truth. From the evidence, the Westerner was a little remiss in this particular. King Charles I. might have been greatly pleased if John Hampden had raised turnips instead of talking sentiment about that ship-tax. King John would no doubt have felt better humored were it not that certain barons and certain "reverend gentlemen at the head of an ancient and powerful Church (one Stephen Langton, Cardinal, for instance) proposed to have what they wanted or raise a row."

"In the North West if they would raise more wheat and less disturbance we would be content."

The statement is not so apposite to that of the Westerner as it might look. The Westerner enunciated false doctrine. This statement about the North-West is of itself very true: the disingenuous part of it is that the blame for the Manitoba and North-West disturbances is by implication thrown upon the Bishops. And yet everyone knows that the Bishops only wanted the Catholics to have been continued in their rights and that it was their enemies who introduced disturbing elements into a system that had been in operation for the twenty years since Manitoba came into Confederation. And "Don" thinks that