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## CURRENT COMMENT

Some of our readers may remember that when last autumn the Brothers of Mary's silver jubilee in this city was celebrated by a banquet at which some remarkable speeches were made, Father Drummond suggested that this country ought henceforth to be called Central, not Western, Canada, the designation "western" implying an adoption of the eastern way of looking at things, whereas our point of view should be continental. Now, Winnipeg, when viewed in its geographical position on the North American continent, and more especially in the inhabited part of Canada, is decidedly central. This fact is officially recognized by railway standard time, which, as everyone knows, divides our continent into four sections, the one in which we live, namely the region between 90 and 105 degrees west longitude, being called the central division and following central time. Meteorologists also place us in what they call "the great central valleys" of the continent. Foster's weather forecasts in particular must be understood in this way, the Red River valley being undoubtedly one of his "great central valleys."

Forty years ago, when Canada was still confined to the eastern portion of British North America, when, consequently, the Canadian outlook was narrow and confined, all the region west of the present Province of Quebec was called "Canada West." But now that we have stretched across the whole continent, who would think of calling any part of Ontario "Western Canada"? Yet the western boundary of Ontario is only 100 miles east of Winnipeg. Why, then, should Manitoba be called a western province, especially now that she has no less than three provinces to the west of her? No, the proper general designation for the region between the 90th and 105th degree—say, between Port Arthur and Regina—is and ought to be Central Canada.

So obviously appropriate is this designation that it is spontaneously adopted by intelligent foreign settlers whose sense of the fitness of things has not been dulled by the influence of a traditional appellation, once excusable but now no longer defensible. In the June number of the "Bulletin de la Canadienne," a Paris monthly published in the interests of immigrants from France to Canada, we find a protestation, signed by 25 French settlers at Wauchope, Assiniboia, which begins thus: "The undersigned French Colonists of Wauchope, Assa., Canada, who have settled during the last year or two in this recently formed colony, deem it their duty to protest against the slanders circulating in France and Belgium concerning the colonisation of the plains of Central Canada, especially of Assiniboia where they reside." Here it will be observed that not only Manitoba but even Assiniboia is considered as belonging to Central Canada by intelligent men who speak from a common sense view of the map. One good way of defining "Central Canada" would be to say that it comprises all that middle portion of Canada which produces crops without artificial irrigation. The last limiting clause excludes the arid belt beyond Moose Jaw.

The French settlers who have thus hit upon the true name for our goodly heritage go on to say that "most of them came to this country without any capital. They began by taking up homesteads of 160 acres each, soil fertile and deep without stones or trees to cut down and uproot. Some of them reaped in 1904 their first harvest, of wheat, and in 1905 several of them will cut one hundred acres of wheat alone. Those who had no money at all to start their farms with hired out among the already wealthy farmers in the neighborhood and earned from 200 to 260 dollars a year besides their board and lodging. In two years they have succeeded in establishing themselves definitely, and in a few more years

their farms will be worth as much as those of their neighbors who came here five or ten years earlier and are already well off. Had these poor people remained in France they would still be as poor as before, perhaps more so. They can but thank "those who persuaded them to emigrate to this country."

That is the sort of immigration report we like to see—signed with real names, and giving facts and figures. One of our correspondents asks us how he can promote immigration to his district. We reply: By sending us such reports as the one given above. Glittering generalities won't do. What we want is details, names, statements of expenses and receipts. The testimony of one man who landed here with less than twenty dollars in his pocket and, at the end of two years had a hundred acres of wheat which brought in \$2000 is a better advertisement than all the glowing general descriptions that are so easy to write and produce so little effect.

This principle—that detailed facts and names are infinitely preferable to vague general statements—applies to all departments of journalism. What interests and convinces the average man is the concrete fact, the proper name, the eloquence of dollars and cents. When we read in some of our contemporaries reports of special events in which proper names are omitted and platitudinous padding takes the place of interesting details, we cannot help thinking that the man who writes such reports has missed his vocation.

We begin this week the publication of a very thoughtful article on "Japan," translated, for "The Apostle of Mary," the home organ of the Brothers of Mary, from the French of Father Ligneul, Director of the Catholic Seminary at Tokyo. At a time when the unexpected successes of the Japanese are exciting the admiration and the fears of the civilized world anything that throws additional light on the character of that extraordinary nation must prove interesting. And Father Ligneul's views are not at all commonplace. His analysis of the Japanese intellect is singularly clear and plausible. His historical sketches are far from superficial. The only thing we regret is his very meagre account of the spread of Christianity in Japan during the second half of the sixteenth century and the early years of the seventeenth. One cannot understand the latent possibilities of Japanese development unless one realizes vividly the heroism of those early Japanese converts. Happily, this period of the History of Japan was very fully and forcibly sketched in our last week's article on "Christianity and Japan."

Talking of Japan reminds us of the following suggestive paragraph which appeared in the Casket of July 20:—

We are not surprised at the suggestion made by the 'Ave Maria' that John Bull has as good reason as Uncle Sam to dread Japanese expansion. More than once we have expressed the opinion that British interests in India have more to fear from Japan now than they ever had from Russia. The sensational despatch of a few days ago concerning the probability of another mutiny worse than that of 1858, may have been written merely to make good "copy" for the newspapers, but we have a strong suspicion that the writer prophesied better than he knew. Lord Salisbury, advertising to the Crimean war, said, "We backed the wrong horse." Some future Foreign Secretary will say the same of the war between Russia and Japan.

Our Antigonish contemporary packs into a small space a great deal of valuable information about a country which has just celebrated the diamond jubilee of its national independence.

Belgium used to be called the "cock-pit of Europe." Everyone knows that the English soldiers "swore horribly in Flanders," when to be in Flanders was synonymous with being

on active service. Here ended the Napoleonic wars, at Ligny, Quatre Bras and Waterloo. France and Germany meant to fight it out in the same ground in 1870, and would have done so, had not Queen Victoria, at the request of her cousin King Leopold, notified them that she would regard the invasion of Belgium as a 'casus belli'. Britain helped Belgium win her independence in 1830, when British arms aided in the capture of Antwerp from the Dutch, and has helped to maintain it ever since. Leopold II. is a notorious profligate; he has treated the members of his family with exceeding harshness; but from a commercial point of view, he is the wisest sovereign of Europe, and to his personal initiative it is due that Belgium has a foreign trade far more extensive than would be expected from its size; he has made the inland cities of Bruges and Brussels large and prosperous seaports by the digging of canals and deepening of natural waterways; he has fostered Antwerp till it has become the second seaport of Europe; and he has abolished the public gambling which once made Belgium of as ill repute as Monaco.

If we give special prominence, on our editorial page to a Belgian's graphic report of the 75th anniversary celebration at Bruxelles in this province, it is because the history of Belgium's struggles is so valuable an object-lesson for us. If Holland had been as fair in her treatment of Catholics in the beginning of the nineteenth century as she is now, the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, created by the treaty of Paris in 1814, might have still been in existence. But Holland then strove to deprive Catholics of all liberty in education and they rose in their might and shook off the Dutch yoke. They realized to the full what too many Canadians Catholics are slow to understand, that, as Mr. Hacault puts it, "at the root of the freedom of the school lies the freedom and independence of the family; that their natural right to educate, according to their own creed, their own ethical tastes and convictions, their own dear children, is not only a natural right, far above any political or public authority, but is itself a divine right which they hold directly, not from the State, nor from the civil law, nor from any political constitution, but from the hands of God Himself, to whom alone they are responsible in matters of conscience and religion."

Those of our readers who are not familiar with the geography of Manitoba may possibly be startled when they read in this report that the Belgian committee of Bruxelles "went to Holland" to receive the Belgian Consul. Holland, in this case, is not a kingdom, but a town in which is the railway station nearest to Bruxelles.

The "Catholic Register" of Toronto is to be congratulated on having secured Mr. William Halley's reminiscences of Canadian history. Some idea of the scope and value of these most interesting recollections may be formed from the fact that Mr. Halley describes events of which he was an eye-witness nearly sixty years ago. Speaking of that eminent statesman, Lord Elgin, the greatest British Governor Canada has ever had, he says: "I well remember seeing the vice-regal turn-out in Hamilton in the fall of 1847, when they opened the Provincial Fair in that city that year. I do not remember the exact date, but it was one of the wettest days I ever experienced. The crowd that met them along the streets was immense, and never before nor since did I see so many umbrellas in use. I well remember Lord Elgin's round, cheerful face, as his cortege proceeded along James street, southward, to the Gore, and his head bowing continuously to the right and to the left, while the cheers of the multitude were loud and hearty. There is no doubt but what Lord Elgin received a right royal reception that day in the Ambitious City, and that the people were well pleased with their new governor, notwithstanding the very unfavorable condition of the elements."

In Mr. Halley's description of the Baldwin-Lafontaine administration of 1848 it is curious to note the complete absence of the word "Canadian" in the designation of the nationality of the ministers. "Immediately after the division on the address on March 4th, the Conservative Government tendered its resignation and Baldwin and Lafontaine were entrusted with the formation of a new administration, which was constituted as follows: Baldwin, Attorney-General, West; Lafontaine, Attorney-General East; Blake (William Hume), Solicitor-General West; Aylwin, Solicitor-General East; Sullivan, Provincial Secretary; Hincks, Inspector General; James Lesslie, President of Council; Caron, Speaker of the Legislative Council; James Harvey Price, Commissioner of Crown Lands; Viger, Receiver General; Tache, Chief Commissioner of Public Works; Malcolm Cameron, Assistant Commissioner of Public Works. Morin was chosen Speaker of the House. This was probably the strongest administration ever formed in Canada before Dominion days. The Irish element consisted of four members; the French were four members, with the Speaker, which made five; the Scotch numbered two and the English—Aylwin and Price—two. As to the nationality of the two latter, I am only making a guess. Aylwin, I am aware, attracted a great deal of attention, and so far as my memory goes, he was a spectacular personality. But he did not remain long in politics and was, I suppose, shelved by a Judgeship." This last supposition is correct. Aylwin was made Judge of the Queen's Bench and ably exercised his functions for many years in Montreal. But, so far as our memory goes, he was an Irishman.

## Clerical News

The annual retreat of the secular clergy of the archdiocese of St. Boniface began last Monday evening. His Grace the Archbishop presided and gave the afternoon conference. The retreat sermons were preached by Rev. Fauther Laufer, O.M.I., of Prince Albert. The retreat ends on Saturday morning. Besides the Very Rev. Vicar General Dugas, the following priests attended: Fathers Bastien, Bazin, Belanger, Beliveau, Campeau, Cloutier, Defoy, Deshaies, Desrosiers, Dufresne, Duffy, Ferland, Fillion, Finke, Gendron, Gillies, A. Giroux, R. Giroux, Heynen, Hogue, Jubinville, Jutras, Kavanagh, Kostorz, Kugener, Lalonde, Maillard, Martin, Messier, Molurier, Nadeau, Perreault, Pirot, Chas. Poirier, Nap. Poirier, Rocan, Rousseau, Theriault, Trudel, Van de Velde, Viens, Woodcutter.

Father Chossegros, S.J., of St. Boniface College, who is supplying for the pastor of St. Anne, Kankakee county, Illinois, writes that the feast of St. Anne is celebrated there with extraordinary devotion. It is preceded by a nine day's retreat. This year Father Chossegros preached twice each of the days of this novena, the morning sermon being in English, and the evening sermon in French. The church was crowded each day, many of the worshippers coming from a distance. One of these was Miss Cunea, who was miraculously cured last year through the intercession of St. Anne. On the feast itself, July 26, there were two thousand pilgrims, 1500 of whom received Holy Communion. Nineteen priests came either as pilgrims or assistants to Father Chossegros, who in one day had to hear 300 confessions and preached three sermons on the Sunday. A seven-year old child who had never yet walked began to walk behind the Blessed Sacrament. There were many conversions of sinners. A woman of 25 made her first communion.

Rev. H. Desjardins, parish priest of St. David de l'Aube-Riviere, opposite the City of Quebec, was here on Wednesday. He had taken in the Portland (Oregon) exhibition and passed by Seattle and Vancouver on his way to Prince Albert, where last Sunday his nephew, Father Benoit, was ordain-

ed priest. Father Desjardins, who returned east on Thursday, was bursar of the Archbishop's residence at St. Boniface 28 years ago, and had not revisited Manitoba during that time. He tried to make his way alone along Main Street to St. Boniface, but got lost and had to inquire. In those early days, whenever he had to make purchases in Winnipeg after a fall of rain, he always found it safer to go on horseback and order from the saddle the goods he wanted, the mud in the streets being something unimaginable now.

Father Benoit, the newly ordained priest, is appointed assistant to Father Fillion, pastor of St. Jean Baptiste.

Father Poitras is appointed assistant secretary to the Archbishop of St. Boniface.

Father Lee, pastor of Oakwood, N.D., spent several days this week as a guest of the Fathers of St. Boniface College. His new church is now far advanced and will be ready for divine worship in October; but the solemn dedication will not take place till next summer, when a new priest's residence will also have been built.

Father Descoteaux, S.J., who filled the place of the pastor of Argyle, Winn., during the past month, returned last Monday to St. Boniface College, and left on Wednesday for the Scholasticate of the Society of Jesus near Montreal, where he will be Professor of Philosophy. He says the convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph at Argyle is very prosperous. Besides their original \$15,000 house they have recently built a new wing, almost as large, which cost \$8,000.

Fathers Veilleux, DeMangeleere and d'Orsonnens, S.J., left last Monday to reside in Montreal. Father Veilleux goes to St. Mary's College, the two others to the Immaculate Conception, De Lorimier.

The Brandon Sun made a slight mistake in the "list of firsts" which appeared lately in its large Exhibition Number. Father Beaudin, O.M.I., was the first Catholic priest in Brandon, Father Robillard, was not the first, but the second.

Rev. H. Seemann writes from Westhope, N. Dak., that he has been, for the past three weeks, teaching catechism four hours a day to children who are preparing for their first communion.

From Saturday to Wednesday he teaches at Westhope, and from Wednesday to Saturday at Hamel (or Gravelly), 16 miles off. When he teaches at Hamel he resides at Gravelly and has to drive five miles to Hamel. In both these places together, Westhope and Hamel, he has about twenty children. Those of Westhope will make their first communion next Sunday, Aug. 6, and those of Hamel the following day. After that he will go to Bottineau, where he will prepare other children and also visit another station for the same purpose. Father Turcotte, for whom the Rev. H. Seemann is doing this useful but laborious work, lately spent twelve days in St. John's hospital at Fargo and is now quite well.

Rev. J. W. Arsenaux writes from Oak Lake on July 28: "Yesterday Father Bouillon and Father Lacasse, bursar of Ste. Therese College and brother of Mrs. S. Briere of this parish, went fishing at the Lake. The parish priest pulled out 101, Father Lacasse, 30, and their companions about 70. Father Lacasse says he never saw so many fish come out of the water on hooks. Father Lacasse preached last Sunday on detachment. Next Sunday he will replace Father Bouillon who goes to Virden. The seven-foot cement foundation of the new presbytery is almost completed. The crops are very good throughout the whole parish."

Father Poitras sang his first High Mass at the Cathedral last Sunday in the presence of His Grace Archbishop Langevin, who was assisted by Father Dandurand, O.M.I., and Father Blain, S.J., Father Theriault was deacon and