

## THE FRENCH LANGUAGE IN CANADA.

THE letter of Father Marest gives us one of the earliest instances of native Canadian expressions grafted on the mother tongue. In speaking of the climate near Hudson's Bay he uses the word *poudrierie*, adding in a parenthesis: "C'est ainsi qu'on appelle une petite neige qui s'insinue partout." This most expressive name for a storm of fine, hard, drifting, powdery snow has not yet been recognized in France; but French-Canadians, having now a literature of their own, can afford to dispense with the approval of the French Academy, pretty much as Americans do not scruple to use words and phrases which are racy of the soil, and which have no adequate equivalent in Dictionary English. Already some of our best Canadian words have found their way into that paragon of pocket manuals, Bellow's French and English Dictionary. I am not denying that there are faults in our Canadian French, as commonly spoken; I am simply combating an erroneous notion that prevails among people whose knowledge of the French language is shadowy. I mean the notion that Canadians speak a sort of *patois*. Some years ago, when I lived in New York, I was not a little amused to hear Americans say that, anxious though they were to see their children learn French, they were afraid to send them to Canada lest they should come home with nothing but a barbarous jargon. My answer usually was that the majority of educated Canadians speak French quite as well as the majority of educated Americans talk English. I might have said more, for I am not aware that there is any such common and widespread fault in French Canada as the use of "will" for "shall," and "would" for "should." But in the main, the parallel holds good even in the matter of accent. For the chief characteristic of the French Canadian, as well as of the American accent, is the tendency to drawl, to be monotonous, and to exaggerate the number of nasal sounds. But these peculiarities are not confined to this continent of ours. They exist in Normandy, and many other parts of France; they are not by any means so faulty as the Provençal or Gascon accent. I have met highly educated men from the north of England whose accent was as nasal as if they hailed from Idaho or Arizona. In fact, I am inclined to think that in all European countries, and particularly in France, Italy, Germany and Spain, the further you wander away from the great centres of culture, where the concourse of highly trained minds stimulates men to perfection in the use of their vocal organs, the more likely are you to find nature's great law of following the line of least resistance, assert itself in drawing and nasality. However, in this respect, as also in a more correct use of French prose—that most subtle and delicate of all modern vehicles of thought—Canada has improved wondrously in the last quarter of a century, and is improving every day. If the United States can point to a revival of letters heralded in the present day by such skilful artists as James, Howells, and Cable, French Canadians may well be proud of Judge Routhier, Benjamin Sulte, Chauveau, Marmette, the two Tachés (our archbishop and his brother), and Louis Honore Frechette.

FATHER DRUMMOND, S.J.

WE welcome the appearance of a new Catholic paper, THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY REVIEW, published at Toronto, Canada, with the approval of the most Rev. Archbishop Lynch. The REVIEW is both bright and solid, and contains a number of interesting and well-written articles. The Catholic press is the great organ for dispelling ignorance and prejudice, and we hail an addition to the army of champions fighting for right and truth.

*The Axe Maria.*

You have talent? Possibly! But do you make the most of it? That is to say, do you exert yourself, more or less, according to times, places and people? If you simply intend, but do not exert yourself, your talent will probably profit no one, and it certainly will not profit you.—*Abbi Roux.*

## CATHOLIC NOTES.

THERE are 114 societies now in the Philadelphia Temperance Union, with probably 14,000 or 15,000 members.

Rev. Father Lefebvre, Superior of the Oblate Fathers in Montreal, is in Rome attending the General Council of the Order.

Very Rev. Father Walsh, V.G., of Philadelphia, has presented to Bishop Cleary for his cathedral in Kingston a magnificent stained glass window, in honour of the Holy Mother of God.

The late Father Beckx, Superior-General of the Jesuits, was a native of Diest, in Brabant, the birthplace of Blessed John Berchmans, S.J., the assurance of whose approaching canonization consoled the saintly old man in his last hours.

Collections are being made in all of the ecclesiastical colleges in Rome, to aid in the construction of a grand monument to St. Thomas Aquinas. The monument will be erected in the Vatican palace, in honour of the sacerdotal jubilee of Leo. XIII.

A move is being made in Memphis, Tenn., to employ the Sisters of Charity as nurses in the City Hospital. Grave charges of indifference and neglect to patients have been of such frequent occurrence, that it is likely the Sisters, who are recognized as the only reliable nurses in the country, will be placed in charge very soon.

*L'Etudiant*, of Johette, says: "That it has been decided to erect a monument in honour of Jacques Cartier, and the first Jesuit Missionaries, at the confluence of the Rivers St. Charles and Lairet, near Quebec. At or near this front the great navigator landed on his second voyage of discovery—15th September, 1535. The 'Catholic Circle' of Quebec has taken the initiative in this grand and patriotic project, and named a committee to solicit and receive subscriptions."

## BOOK REVIEWS.

"THE Life and Labours of Archbishop Lynch," by H. C. McKeown. Montreal: James A. Sadlier; Toronto: Troy & Co.

We have in the biography before us, the story of a long and an eventful life, and the record of nearly a half-century of missionary, educational and episcopal labour, and of truly apostolic self-sacrifice and endeavour. Mr. McKeown's book is a careful and meritorious production, and an agreeable change from biographies of the clap-trap character so unfortunately common. The story of the life of the Archbishop is, to a great extent, the story of the growth and extension of the Church in Ontario; and apart from its interest as a narrative of the many remarkable incidents in His Grace's career, the present volume is a not unimportant contribution to the history of the Church in this country. It embodies selections from the most important of the Archbishop's pastorals, lectures and sermons, and is a book of instructive and most interesting reading.

## THE ONTARIO MUTUAL LIFE ASSURANCE CO.

IN the annual report of the above Company, published in our columns of last week, the income from premiums for 1885 read in error, \$237,605.32, instead of \$237,665.32, and the net assets 600,617.05, instead of \$660,617.05.

## CANVASSERS WANTED.

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