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EDITORIAL NOTES.

THIS IS THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT, and we would remind our readers of the fact that the dispensations of last year, which were granted on account of the prevailing sickness in Canada, no longer exist. The cause being removed by the Mercy of Divine Providence there is no longer any reason why the regulations as to fast and abstinence should not be enforced. Therefore the same obligations that in the past existed are this year uninterrupted and the members of the Church must follow as of old the rules laid down for this holy season.

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ONE OF THE most important appointments made by the present great Pontiff is that of Cardinal Logue of Armagh. He occupies the See of Ireland's Primate, he is the direct successor of St. Patrick, and these facts, aside from his own individual worth, were sufficient in themselves to commend his elevation to the Holy Father. But when we take into consideration the saintly qualities and the extraordinary abilities of the new Cardinal, as well as his deep learning, vast charity, meritorious works, and honest patriotism, it would have been a matter of surprise had the eagle eye of Leo XIII. not detected, off in that western Isle, in the person of Archbishop Logue, a most glorious subject for the highest honors that a Sovereign Pontiff could confer. While congratulating His Eminence on the occasion of his elevation to the dignity of the cardinalate, we feel that these congratulations must be extended to the Irish Hierarchy and to the whole Irish race.

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THIRTEEN YEARS AGO a bill to give the civil marriage rite precedence over the religious ceremony was rejected by the Senate of Italy when a hundred thousand Catholics petitioned against it. To-day it is being attempted to have a similar measure become law in that sunny land of strange political and religious contradictions. We understand that the Catholics of the country are again circulating a giant petition against this unholy movement. Leaving aside the question of religion, socially speaking such a law would eventually terminate in the ruin of all social stability. Followed to its logical results the enactment of such a measure and the carrying of it into effect would shake the very pillars and ground work of society, and therefore of the State. It is to be hoped that the petition of 1880 will be as successful as was that of 1880.

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WE NOTICE by a special in the Globe from London, that "the Hon. Edward Blake's help as a speaker at the bye-elections now in progress, continues to be much in demand. Last night he spoke at Pontefract, on behalf of Mr. Beckett, the Liberal candidate, dealing in detail with the programme of the ministers as outlined in the Queen's speech." The Leeds Mercury says: "Mr. Blake was listened to with rapt attention by a large audience who frequently cheered him

heartily." It is evident, by all reports, that the first Canadian statesman who has had the honor of sitting in the Imperial House of Commons, is a man of no ordinary caliber, and that he appears conspicuously amongst the vast number of ordinary M.P.'s in that vast assemblage. While recognizing the importance of Mr. Blake's presence in the arena of British politics, our friends beyond the ocean will very probably have soon to recognize still more the transcendent abilities of our Canadian representative—for such he is—when the great Home Rule struggle, the most important debate of this century, will commence in the House of Commons. We fervently anticipate greater proofs of Mr. Blake's ability, and that within the very near future.

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HON. SENATOR MURPHY forwarded, this week, an instalment of five hundred dollars to Hon. Edward Blake, M. P., in the British House of Commons, in aid of the Irish Home Rule fund. The Blake Fund Committee held their last meeting in St. Ann's Hall, as we have already announced a short time ago. The series of meetings in the different parishes has been suspended for the present owing to the many calls on the generously disposed during this most severe season. We feel confident that Montreal will give a good account of itself when the parishes of St. Mary's, St. Anthony's and St. Gabriel's shall have been heard from. Strong organization is required to carry on successfully the good work throughout the country and it is to be regretted that some personages, who have made Home Rule a political factor for their own aggrandisement, when it suited their purpose, are abstaining entirely from manifesting the slightest interest in the cause, now that practical work, costing a little time and money, is to be done. The crisis is now at hand and this is the time when the sincerely honest Home Rulers should give their attention to the establishment of funds elsewhere and the practical work of sending some tangible assistance to those whose duty it is to fight the battle to the bitter end. Montreal is to be congratulated upon its generous and constant support, in good as well as in difficult times, of the men who seek to carry a measure that will serve to raise Ireland to her rightful rank amongst the nations.

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ON FRIDAY NEXT, the 17th instant, the ex-Pontifical Zouaves, living in Quebec, will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of their departure for Rome. We know not if there are many survivors of that gallant band of enthusiastic defenders of the most sacred cause on earth, but we are positive that those who shall meet the day after to-morrow will recall many an interesting event and many a sad souvenir. A quarter of a century has rolled past since the memorable events took place in which our young Canadians played a not inglorious part. In those days the gray head of the venerable Pius IX, was bowed with sorrow, his home was a prison, his liberty a

phantom and the armed strength of in fideity thundered at the gates of Rome and menaced the doors of the Vatican. From Castellamare to the Porte Pia, scenes of devastation were taking place, while alone and sublime upon his throne sat the Vicar of Christ, as in the name of God he commanded the Civic Guard to lay down arms rather than unnecessarily spill the blood of his enemies. "The cross, like at Milan, glittered in the haze of battle and pointed to eternity." To-day, after twenty-five long years, the grand successor of Pius IX. sits upon the same throne, looks out from the same palace prison upon scenes not so wild and bloody as those of 1868, but equally as melancholy and as unpromising. Italian freemasonry, secret socialism, heartless infidelity are hovering around the See of Peter, and threaten at any moment to fire the poisoned arrows of vengeance at the heart of the venerable Vicar of Christ. Never were the promises of Our Lord more faithfully illustrated, the unceasing battle that His representatives would have to fight, and the assurance that His constant presence with His Holy Church. Friday's anniversary is one of historical importance as well as of rich and varied souvenirs for the Zouaves.

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THE FOLLOWING is an extract from the *Irish Catholic and Nation* of the 28th January last:

Ex-Premier Mercier, of Quebec, has made a declaration in favor of independence for Canada. The whole Dominion seems to be undecided whether to set up as an autonomous nation or to seek annexation with the United States. But there appears to be a growing popular demand for complete and permanent separation from England. "John Bull," says the *New York Catholic Review*, "must go—America is for Americans. Whenever the great mass of the American people comes to believe that it would be a good thing to admit the Canadian States to the American Union, those States will be admitted without any derogation from their rights as sovereign States to manage their own domestic affairs just as New Hampshire does."

It is not surprising that Mr. Mercier should have imposed on certain eminent personages in France to the extent of having a bishop to proclaim him the future hope of the Church in Canada, and to have certain newspapers announce him as the Prime Minister of the Dominion. All this we can readily understand. But that the Irish press should be so far taken in as to place any weight upon what that hon. gentleman might say about the subjects of either Canadian independence, or Canadian annexation, is something beyond our comprehension. Probably, our esteemed Dublin contemporary is not thoroughly acquainted with the political history of this province during the past six years, and the extraordinary escapades, in that arena, of Mr. Mercier. We would just draw attention to our editorial of this week under the heading, "Prof. Goldwin Smith, et al." It seems to us that after perusing the quotations to be found in that column and the comments thereon, the European

Press will find that because Mr. Mercier declares Canada to be in an undecided state on these questions, it does not follow that the people of this country are in the state of mind that he represents.

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A SUBSCRIBER sends us an article clipped from the *Daily Witness* of the 18th January last, headed the "Priests vs. Bishops; a Roman Catholic ecclesiastic's observations on Mgr. Satolli's mission," and he accompanies the same with this remark: "Please riddle this or adm." We suppose he means that if we cannot explain away what is stated in that published interview that we should admit its correctness. In the first place we do not admit the correctness of the statements therein made, nor do they savor at all of having emanated from any Catholic ecclesiastic. The article opens with these words: "Said a Roman Catholic ecclesiastic to the writer recently." Who is that Roman Catholic ecclesiastic? Who is the writer? When and where did he say what is reported? Questions we hold that should be answered before we undertake to prove the fallacy of the statements made. Moreover, we find the interviewed party closing his remarks with these words: "In writing this out please do not mention my name. The consequences to me might be unpleasant." It is likely that the consequences would be unpleasant even though he were not an ecclesiastic, since he assumes to give the *Witness* pointers upon a subject which he evidently does not understand himself, or if he understands it has wilfully perverted the facts. We have no intention of entering into a controversy upon such an important question with any man, lay or cleric, who claims to be a Catholic, who fears to have his name published in connection with his assertions, and who sells his imaginary knowledge to the *Daily Witness* for the purpose of having a slap at the Church.

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WITHOUT DESIRING to enter into the endless maze of that burning question of the Panama scandal, we think that the whole world is touched with a feeling of pity for the aged DeLesseps, in the hour of his great misfortune and fearful affliction. Had the Panama canal scheme been a success the whole of France, and probably a large portion of Europe, would be on bended knee before the great old man who had performed such prodigies in the interests of civilization during his life time. A greater monument than even the Egyptian pyramid is that triumph of engineering the Suez Canal. What Alexander never dreamed of, what Caesar could not imagine, what Napoleon would have ridiculed as impossible, DeLesseps accomplished. He carved that great highway between Europe and the East, and has left it a lasting and incalculable boon to the world, at once from a commercial, an international and a religious point of view. But, like all great men, he had the misfortune, in his old age, to fall in an undertaking, and all the past, his years of labor, his deep research, his wonderful achievements are forgotten, and what the French Republic calls "blind justice" has decapitated "common gratitude."