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Current Comment

The "Free Press Evening Bulletin" of the 1st inst. published an abstract of an interview with Mr. H. Cleroux, of Aubigny, Man., who maintained his version of the expulsion of Mrs. Pelland, and questioned the value of the signatures appended to the protest which we printed last week. Reverend Father Desrosiers will doubtless explain this matter. Meanwhile, Mr. Cleroux himself states that twenty-one of the signatures represent heads of families and this means a decided majority in a parish which numbers less than forty families. But Mr. Cleroux observes a significant and ominous silence with regard to the chief gravamen of the Aubigny parishioners' protest, namely, the indignation of the parish against the man who stirs up strife through revenge, because he has been convicted and heavily fined for selling liquor without licence on Sundays. Evidently on this, the most important statement of the protest, Mr. Cleroux had nothing to say and said it.

The question whether Sunday should or should not be the Lord's Day has been recently discussed in the "Free Press" by two Protestant ministers. One, a seventh day Adventist, held that the change from Saturday, the seventh day of the week, to Sunday, the first day of the week, was nowhere mentioned in the Bible. The other, an "evangelist," in a rambling, unconvincing reply, refers to Acts, xx, 7, and 1 Cor. xvi, 2, where the first day of the week is mentioned as a day for the "breaking of bread" and "collections;" but, as these texts do not breathe a word of the abrogation of that most important Old Testament law of the observance of the Sabbath, he rests his main defence upon a passage from St. Ignatius, who, he says, "lived in the days of the apostles, for in the year 70 he was made bishop of Antioch, and was martyred for the faith of Jesus in the year 107." This passage by the way, while containing these words: "let them no longer observe the Jewish Sabbath, but live according to the resurrection of the Lord," does not explicitly mention the first day of the week. And yet the writer maintains that it plainly "shows the first day was kept in the days of the apostles." Whether or not this passage is conclusive does not matter, for there are many other quite convincing passages in St. Ignatius and the other early fathers, showing that the observance of the first day as the Lord's Day dates from apostolic times. But it is curious to note that these evangelical Protestants, who stoutly maintain that all their beliefs and practices are explicitly contained in the Bible, have to appeal to tradition to explain the obscure texts of that same Bible.

How vigorously the English Catholics are fighting for recognition of their educational rights may be seen by the following article from the Liverpool "Catholic Times," of Jan. 12, taking to task its great contemporary, "The Tablet," for a leader which is published the preceding week on "The Elections and the Catholic Schools." Premising that the "Catholic Times" represents Popular Catholic feeling even better than "The Tablet," we subjoin the strictures of the former.

A Mischievous Article

We feel impelled by the imperative sense of duty to repudiate in the strongest terms and with all the emphasis at our command on behalf of the Catholic body in this country the suggestions contained in an article on the education question which appeared in the last issue of our Catholic contemporary, the "Tablet." In a summary paragraph descriptive of the contents of the article, they are referred to by the "Tablet" as embodying "the essentials of the Catholic demand." With deliberation we say it is simply intolerable that the editor, without having consulted either the Bishops or the rank and file

of the Catholic body, should assert that in that article are to be found the essentials of the Catholic demand. It does not contain the essentials of the Catholic demand. In this matter the editor of the "Tablet" has daringly, and we will add, considering the present circumstances, perniciously misrepresented Catholic feeling. Father Pinnington, of Liverpool, on behalf of a large number of managers, denounces the article as an abandonment of the key-stone of the position, and the indignant protests we have received from those of our readers who have perused the article, are entirely in accord with this view. When we read it we could only rub our eyes in astonishment and ask ourselves what had become of the editor's sanity. On the eve of a General Election when a large number of candidates are searching for plausible pretexts to offer as excuses for refusing to fully satisfy the Catholic educational requirements, he tells them that the Catholics will be content with a demand which would be a renunciation of all our claims and strivings hitherto, and which, we feel confident, would find acceptance neither with Bishops nor with priests nor with people. The Catholics are, forsooth, to have two managers out of six in their own schools, and to hand over to the Local Authorities the right to appoint the teachers absolutely, the power to object to a teacher on religious grounds being reserved to the trustee. And for this crude system of recognition of the elementary right of the child to be taught in the creed of its parents the Catholics are to give up every vestige of authority in the schools upon which they have spent three millions of pounds.

The able editor of the "Catholic Times" does not stop at criticism of his contemporary; he sets forth his own view of the "Hopeful Signs" in a long and well thought out editorial. Writing on or immediately before January 12, he says that, "as the days go on, and the addresses of political candidates are published, evidence increases that Catholics have succeeded in making a deep impression upon most of the men who solicit the favors of the electorate. All talk of a purely secular system of national education has been abandoned." He then goes on to remark that Mr. Birrell, President of the Board of Education, who "holds in his hands the fate of our schools," has "been sobered by the responsibilities of office. He now sees that the wishes of parents in regard to the religious education of their children must be considered. And we shall not be in the least surprised, if, when he comes to frame his Bill, he recognises that those wishes are deeper and stronger on the part of Catholics than of any other religious section of the community." Then, after showing that the Anglicans have much reason to fear, because they are "neither bold, determined, nor united," he continues:—

The position, then, is clear for the Catholic voter. Everything bids fair to give him success. The Liberal party recognise that our situation is exceptional, as our sacrifices have been exceptionally great. They would gladly find some compromise which would satisfy our claims and do justice to our demands. They should not have much difficulty in finding such compromise. Our claims are clear: Catholic schools, with Catholic teachers, for Catholic children, and under Catholic management. We say management, not control. The public authority may exercise its control in the direction of seeing that it gets an adequate educational return for the money it expends. That is but just. But the management, with all that it connotes, must be Catholic. We demand to have our religion taught,

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PRESENTATION TO MR. F. W. RUSSELL AT THE CATHOLIC CLUB

The Executive and members of the Catholic Club are to be congratulated on the brilliant success of the open meeting they held in their rooms on Tuesday evening. A very large and representative gathering of the Catholics of the city, a splendid programme of vocal and instrumental music and elocution, and a presentation to the retiring president, Mr. F. W. Russell were the special features of the occasion, and the whole affair passed off in a manner that fully maintained the well established reputation of the Club in such matters.

The programme was opened with a grand march by the St. Mary's Lyceum orchestra. "Old Dartmouth," which was



MR. F. W. RUSSELL

splendidly given and elicited loud applause. A song by Mr. Frank Flanagan "Forgotten" (Maedowell), received a well merited encore, as did also a piano solo ably played by Miss Dutton, "Prelude in C Minor" (Racuruff). "The Death of Gaudentius," by Miss Barry was a grand elocutionary effort, and the talented young lady showed her versatility by responding to the encore she received with a humorous selection, "The Bootblack." The final item of the first part of the programme was a vocal solo, "Swallows," (Cowan), by Miss Rose Braniff, whose sweet voice and artistic methods captivated the audience. She responded to a vociferous encore with "The Merry Month of May," another piece of delightful vocalization. An overture by the Lyceum orchestra, "Lustspiel," (Keler-Bela) opened the second part, and was encored, and then Mr. H. Cottingham charmed the audience with an excellent violin solo, "La Zingara," (A. Moffatt), and was heartily recalled. Mrs. Donald McKenty next gave, with her inimitable skill, a thrilling recitation, "Nell Latour," (Sir Gilbert Parker) and in response to one of the heartiest recalls of the evening, delighted the audience with her quaint and humorous rendition of "The School Marm's Courtship."

The presentation took place at an interval in the programme and was made by the new president, Mr. J. E. O'Connor, who, in graceful terms and eloquent language spoke of the obligations the Club is under to Mr. Russell for the ability, zeal and energy with which he had filled the office of president for the past three years. It was a matter of deep regret to all the members when the late president announced that he could not see his way clear to accept the office for another year, and they now wished in the presence of that large and representative audience to tender him an expression of their appreciation of what he had done, and to ask him to accept a slight token of their feelings. He then presented Mr. Russell, amidst loud cheering, with a most elegant and costly decanter, glasses and stand.

Mr. Russell, on taking the platform, was loudly cheered. In a speech of considerable feeling and effective elo-

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Persons and Facts

Fifty thousand people migrated from Ireland last year.

Right Rev. James Duhig, recently appointed to the See of Rockhampton, Queensland, is probably the youngest bishop in the world. He was born in County Limerick, Ireland, thirty-four years ago.

Toronto, January 29—At a meeting of the committee appointed by the Protestant denominations to discuss the question of religious instruction in schools, a resolution was adopted to ask the Minister of Education for legislation to set aside two periods a week in the public and high school curriculums, where possible, to be devoted to instruction in Biblical knowledge and the memorization of passages of Scripture. This resolution will be presented for their approval to the ministerial committee and to the Ontario Teacher's Association, after which, both parties being agreeable, it will be brought before the Government.

According to the annual report of New York's Commissioner of Education, 1,234,680 pupils were registered last year in the public elementary schools of the state, 172,518 in the Catholic elementary schools and 27,828 in all other parish and parochial schools. The entire amount of money expended by the State in the year for elementary schools was \$41,064,842.89. According to these figures, as the "Catholic News" points out, it costs the State \$33.50 per annum to educate every child in the public elementary schools. The Catholic elementary schools, therefore, by educating, at the expense of the Catholic parents, 172,518 children, saves the taxpayers of New York State \$5,779,353 every year. But that does not represent all the saving to the State by Catholics. The cost and maintenance of the school buildings should be added.

George Poell, the newly elected County Clerk of Hall county, Nebraska, to whom has been awarded the first medal of honor given under the act of Congress approved February 23, 1905, for conspicuous bravery in saving the life of a child at the risk of his own, is a member of St. Mary's congregation at Grand Island, Neb., and his fellow-Catholics are proud of the honor that has come to so deserving a man. Mr. Poell, who was a locomotive fireman crept along the side of his engine to the pilot and snatched a child from the track, saving it from harm, but he himself fell under the engine, losing a leg and being otherwise badly injured.

Rev. Louis Lalande, S.J., disavows certain statements attributed to him by eastern dailies in an interview on the relations between the Irish and the French-Canadians in New England states.

Archbishop Bourne, of London, recently paid a visit to the central offices of the Gramophone company, where a record of his voice was taken for preservation in the British Museum. He also delivered a message as to the Catholic position on the education question which will be available for reproduction through the gramophone at public meetings. The Archbishop had the satisfaction of listening to a "rough proof" of this record within one minute of making it.

Justice Tierney, of Brooklyn, N.Y., has abolished the use of the Bible in his court. He says it was desecrated too often by lying mouths. He now takes the affirmation of witnesses and does his best towards ascertaining the truth.

Pope Pius, who will celebrate in 1908 the jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood, when asked if he desired that the festivities be similar to those witnessed on the occasion of the priesthood jubilee of the late Pope Leo, when

an international exhibition was held in the Vatican, said: "No. I wish the celebration to maintain a strictly religious character."

The Reverend Mother Superior General of the Congregation de Notre Dame Montreal, and her secretary, have just returned from their visit to the Eternal City, whither they had been summoned by His Holiness Pope Pius X., in connection with the process of canonization of their foundress, the Venerable Margaret Bourgeois.

We notice that of late months the majority of our exchanges in all parts of the world, from the "Examiner," of Bombay, to the "Record," of Ontario, have been commenting on the Young Men's Christian Association. The consensus of Catholic opinion appears to be that the society is an excellent one for Protestant young men to join—and Catholic young men to keep out of.

Briefly, the association founded by the late Sir George Williams is a distinctly non-Catholic organization, productive no doubt of excellent results among Protestant young men, but decidedly inimical in its whole tone, atmosphere and influence, to the robust Catholicity, by which the young men of our faith should be characterized. There are nowadays abundant Catholic associations for social, benevolent and even recreative purposes to gratify the legitimate aspirations of any member of the Church; and young members more especially should eschew Protestant societies.—Ave Maria.

A census of Cincinnati recently showed that 60 per cent. of the population is Catholic, which proved a surprise to the parish priests.

The Father General of the Society of the Missionary Sons of Mary, Rt. Rev. Clemente Serrat, died recently at the mother-house of the society at Aranda, in the province of Burgos, Spain. The deceased was 74 years of age and had occupied the exalted office of General for the past seven years. He was a man of great learning and piety and the third General of the Society, which was founded in 1849.

A press cable despatch from Seville, Spain, announces the death on January 19 of Cardinal Spinola, Archbishop of that See. Hewas created a Cardinal on December 11.

It is proposed to erect a monument to the late Canon O'Hanlon, author of that monumental work in eleven volumes, "Lives of the Irish Saints." His great task prevented much history of great value from passing into oblivion.

The first volume of the Catholic Encyclopedia will soon leave the hands of the publishers. It will contain 2,500 titles of letter A. The editors hope to complete two volumes in 1906, and the remaining 13 within the specified time of five years. Every country and every Catholic interest will be represented in the work.

Lent will begin early this year. Ash Wednesday will fall on February 28 and the period of sackcloth and ashes will close on April 15. The following are dates of movable Holy Days and special Sundays of 1906: Septuagesima Sunday, February 11; Sexagesima Sunday, February 18; Quinquagesima Sunday, February 25; Shrove Tuesday, February 27; Ash Wednesday, February 28; Quadragesima Sunday, March 4; Palm Sunday, April 8; Good Friday, April 13; Easter Sunday, April 15; Low Sunday, April 22; Rogation Sunday, May 20; Ascension Day, May 24; Whit Sunday, June 3; Trinity Sunday, June 10; Corpus Christi, June 14; Advent Sunday, December 2.

Catholic education at Alexandria, Dumbartonshire, Scotland, is reported as making very satisfactory headway.

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