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A SYNOPSIS CONTINUED, by " CRUX,"

In recent issues I have reproduced portions of the admirable series of articles, from the pen of the gifted Father A. Belanger, S.J., in the "Messenger of the Sacred Heart." Under the general heading of "Disowned." Father Belanger has been exposing the true situation of the religious congregations that are now menaced by the Law of Associations in France. His last contribution

sirable neighborhoods. They own immense boarding schools, hospitals built on a strictly modern plan, wonderfully appointed homes for the

The reverend writer then sets forth his case, after an appropriate exordium, by the following proposition

times (five cents) a day in exchange for the innumerable services he ren-ders and of which Taine spake so touchingly."

The fiction of a revenue is thus

"Mosenager of the Sacred Heart."
Under the general heading of "Disowned." Father Belanger has been exposing the true situation of the religious congregations that are now menaced by the Law of Associations in France. His last contribution, which is to be continued in future numbers, deals with what he styles—using the language of the anticlericals—"The Scandalous Riches of Religious Congregations."

I will have but scant space to comment upon this splendid article; in fact, to do it justice, I see no other way than to simply reproduce its principal paragraphs, and confine my own remarks, for the present at least, to indicating the trend of the writer's arguments. In truth he has, as far as this contribution goes, exhauated the subject, and, for the life of me, I cannot sse where the seffenies of the religious Orders can find a single inch of ground whereon to base a repfy.

He commences with the cry of the virtuosi of anti-clericalism, to the effect that "hundreds of millions" represent the hoarded wealth of the religious congregations, a cry which a sensation-loving press takes up and repeats in every key. They tell, with indignation not untainted with exaltation, how "these poor religious own magnificent colleges, with freestone fronts and large windows admitting plenty of light and air, the buildings being offset by extensive and beautiful gardens. None of them but have property in the most desirable neighborhoods. They own immense boarding schools, hospitals built on a strictly modern plan,

ple ("and in doing so we take a mighty leap,") who are dazzled by certain religious houses standing in the midst of beautiful gardens and surroundings. We read:—

the midst of beautiful gardens and surroundings. We read:

"There was a time when the enemies of congregations, boldly and with a super's a priori, estimated the wealth of the latter at millions; but, alas for this charitable phantasma-goria, statistics have appeared which have singularly impoverished Aladdin's palace!"

The statistics that follow constitute the foundation of all the arguments advanced by Rev. Father Belanger. As this phase of the subject can, with the slight alterations needed to make the figures correspond with the different local cases, be made absolutely applicable to the financial status of religious communities in our own country, I will simply have to ask the readers to carefully peruse the figures and data set forth. Firstly, we have a comparison between the aggregate wealth of all the religious congregations in France and the fortunes possessed by individuals. I now quote

After all these, what I might call preliminaries, the writer goes to the bottom of the question, which is how to excuse religious families who, though professing poverty, are nevertheless in possession of these grand establishments which are causin such extended and unfavorable comment. Read carefully the following statement:—

deed delighted to have made a false estimate, especially one to their own detriment. If many a religious establishment were thus put into the hands of appraisers the result would be similar. They seem more valuable thain they really are, because they are so scrupulously clean, so exquisitely kept, and, not infrequently, because of the good tasted disjlayed by their owners and architects. Finally, where valuable buildings are really found, it is not the congreganistes owning them who most enjoy them, for they are chiefly, almost exclusively, given over to the use of boarders or other lay inmates. Take, for instance, a well-built, hygienic, well-ventilated home for the aged peor. In its gardens, attractively laid out with shaded walks and artistic flower beds, the poor old folks can exercise their weary, feeble limbs. The rooms of the tuilding are high studded, well lighted, and, with their clean white curtains, present a most refreshing appearance. But for whom all this cleanliness and luxury? For the sick, The Sisters' dormitory is often a garret exposed to the winter's cold and the summer's heat. At any rate, it is nearly always in one of the least desirable locations in the house. Of all the apartments in the luxuriously appointed domicile the dormitory and the chapel are alone reserved to the religious. They have scarcely any leisure to take a turn in the garden, so engrossed are they with the care of the sick. They spend but little time in the spacious corridors, unless when sweeping them, and perhaps they would then be satisfied to have them smaller. If, indeed, they gain anything from the sanitary comforts about them, it heips them to labor still more effectually for the welfare of their infirm proteges. Therefore we ask if such luxury should in any way scandalize those who want for nothing. We think not."

Dealing with colleges and homes of education the author thus proceeds:

Dealing with colleges and homes of education the author thus proceeds:

"And as to colleges, there is no great difference. Large, well-ventilated recreation halls, classrooms and dormitories, parlors resplendent with encaustics, etc.—all are for the benefit of the pupils, their health and their good cheer. No doubt the professors derive some advantage from this material progress. Nevertheless, here again they take the last places. In some of the hand-somest colleges, masters and disciplinarians occupy small cells, and perhaps twenty times a day must climb to the fourth story, where their humble quarters are located. Many of them sleep in a dormitory, and though all possible precautions be taken to insure proper ventilation, this is not over-agreeable, especially when one's lungs have lost the elasticity of youth. It can indeed be readily seen that it is the pupils, and scarcely ever the religious, who enjoy the advantages of these supposed places. But they have a garden! Yes, to be sure. But what is a luxury for men of the world is for them a necessity. This is obvious where there is a question of semi-cloistered religious. Certainly one cannot live without air, and as regards congreganistes, it must be borne in mind that it is altainly one cannot live without air, and as regards congreganistes, it must be borne in mind that it is almost impossible for them to walk out. Picture them correcting their pupils' exercises, preparing class lessons, or reading their breviary on the Boulevard des Italiens! The life of teaching religious is so hard that it costs many their health. Therefore, why reproach them for having a few feet of ground necessary to maintain the strength which they put to such good use?"

lowed by a very clear explanation:

"Lastly, I shall not deny that here and there may be found religious property too luxurious in its appointments. But the fault often lies with founders, who were more generous and artistic than practical. In other days certain superiors thought it well to allow a little ornanentation, but herein lay their mistuke However, it only brings out in stronger relief the wisdom of others who, though indulging in all the latest sanitary improvements, know how to observe religious moderation. Here, then, is what remains of this analysis founded upon facts and figures; that the colossal weath of congreganistes is reduced to 3,125 francs per capita, capital almost entirely at the disposal of the poor and from which the religious draw personally only a modest, dwelling place and perhaps—year perhaps—yearly income of a few pulcy francs. The remainder of their support is gained by dint of labor and devotednes."

much on my space this week that I will leave this subject for another time. Yet, I feel that the readers will not hold any grudge against me for having given so fully the foregoing splendid contribution.

OUR CURBSTONE OBSERVER

On "Kneeling."

Josh Perkins of Punkinville says You will be purty safe in Konkludin' that the feller what kneels on one knee in church don't kneel on my at home." And "Quip" of New Zealand says :- "That is about right." I happen to have consider able reason for agreeing with both of these eminent gentlemen. If they ever happened to be in the vicinity of Montreal on Sunday, and under-took to attend High Mass, in some of our churches they would find am-ple evidence of the inconvenience to stranger resulting from this one kneed system congregating at church doors. They would equally, upon their own argument or basis of reasoning, be forced to conclude that a considerable percentage of our male population, at least, was not given to very much kneeling or praying at

These remarks have brought to my mind some observations of my own which, on more than one occasion, I had intended transcribing 'for the benefit-if not for the edification-of the readers of the "True Witness." I will just tell you what happened to me four weeks ago last Sunday I happened to be visiting a friend in one of the suburban parishes of Montreal, and as our business kept us up a good portion of Saturday night, he invited me to remain with him till next day. I accepted. In the morning I sauntered out, intendhim till next day. I accepted. In the morning I sauntered out, intending, as usual to hear Mass. I was much edified to notice the large attendance at the parish church; but I soon found that it was no easy matter for a person who held no pew in that church to secure a place. After I had stumbled over a score of men, all kneeling as above described,— a few having handkerchiefs under the knee—I managed to get inside the doors. There I discovered that I had to work my way, as best I could, through another phalanx of one-knee kneelers, stepping with great care, in order to avoid upsetting any one, and being knocked from my own equilibrium. Finally I cleared the crowd—some of whom made use of language, in regard to my intrusion, that was more emphatic than elegant, and more profane than religious—and reached an open space in the main aisle. The Mass had just commenced.

I saw an empty pew, about five yards from the door, and I quietly stepped into it. I had just settled down, and was collecting my mind preparatory to following the Mass, when a lady, accompanied by a gentleman and two boys, sailed up the aisle, stopped at the pew, and peremptorily signalled me to get out. I did so.

Leaning against a pillar I followed the sermon as best I could; once it was over, I found that I would have to shift my position, as the one-kneed gentlemen came trooping in, and evidently were bent on making it as comfortable as possible for me. At last I found a seat for my-self on one of the steps of the stairway leading up to the organ loft. Although I was out of sight of the altar and sanctuary, still I hoped, with the aid of a prayer book, to follow the remainder of the Mass, I was getting on swimmingly, when an official, in all the glory of a many-colored cloak—possibly after the patern of that worn by Joseph of oid—gave me a sharp tap on the shoulder, and informed me that it was forbidden to sit there. I asked him if he would be good enough to tell me where I might ait. "Not here, anyway," was his reply and he walked off to disturb some of the one-kneed worshippers who were holding a quiet chat (about the croops, or the hot weather, very like-ly) under the protection of the high backs that close the last pews in the alsie.

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course to take. But I never suspected that any such precaution would be necessary. I merely relate these facts, not in complaint for the purpose of showing how very thoughtless some people are—especially as regards the comforts or conveniences of others. I can scarcely believe that I have mentioned were so absorbed in their devotions they could not see a stranger standing beside them. I hold a penny that if I were walking along the road and either of these people were driving home alone in his rig, he would never think of passing me without offering me a seat. Why should it be otherwise in church?

While I was a successive to the purpose of the Calholic School Commission

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INSIST ON HAVING

While I am on this topic I will say that I have observed several other characteristics of regular church attendants, which might without any inconvenience, be a little amended. The fellow on one knee—provided he does not make it a point to plant himself in the narrowest passage, or in the door-ways of the pews—is not the greatest distraction in church. Of course, he always keeps you in a state of hot water, fearing that he may fall off his knee and injure himself, or that he may become suddenly guilty of some other eccentricity. But he is not a patch on the dignified, stylish, his knee and injure himself, or that he may become suddenly guilty of some other eccentricity. But he is not a patch on the dignified, stylish, ease-loving attendants who find it necessary, the moment a priest commences to speak, to clear their throats, sctile their knceling tenches, clap their prayer-books, arrange their dresses, cross their legs, and take a good look around, surveying the half of the congregation, preparatory to listening to the sermon—or else going to sleep in the most comfortable attitude obtainable. As a rule, especially at High Mass on Sunday, the very first announcements from the pulpit are the most important—and generally no person ever hears them. The priest ascends the pulpit; all is still. He opens a book; not a sound is heard. He says, for example, "The prayers of the faithful are requested, for....;" there is such a general shuffle, and stirring, and coughing, and spitting, that you are left to guess for whom you are asked to pray. Or else he begins, thus: "Next Sunday the church celeb....;" the same racket goes on, and you can hunt up, if you like, in your prayer-book, or in a list of the feasts, for the balance of that announcement.

of that announcement.

I remember a good parish priest, not many miles from the capital, who had become so accustomed to this species of general interruption, that he made it a rule to speak for a couple of minutes about things that were totally indifferent, before either making a serious announcement or commencing a sermon. On one occasion, he had waited a minute or so, until all would be still, before speaking, and the moment he pronounced a first word the stir commenced. He merely said: "Dear brethren, I say dear brethren, because, as we are all members of the same Holy Church, of the same family, we actually are brethren in Christ." By this time silence prevailed, and he continued by actually making the first announcement of the day. After Mass, in conversation with him, I asked why he had insisted on the fact of our being all brethren. "Did you catch what I said?" he asked; and added, "if you did you must have good ears, or else you were awfully attentive."



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