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Northwest Review.

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CURRENT COMMENT.

We often hear and read of the low birth-rate in France and in the New England states consequent upon the growth of materialism and licentiousness in those parts. It is therefore, to say the least, startling, to read that one of the Canadian provinces has the lowest birth-rate of any country in the world. According to the official statistics the highest birth-rate in Ontario for the past five years has been 21.7 per thousand and in 1896, the last year for which we have the figures, the rate was 21.2. The rate in France, the lowest in Europe, for the same year was 21.9 per thousand, and in Massachusetts, the lowest of the New England states, 27.02 per thousand. There is certainly much food for reflection in these figures, and they at least show that the moralists of Toronto have no right in this regard at least to point the finger of scorn, as they have been in the habit of doing, at France and New England.

THE WASTE OF WAR.

A shell thrown from a twenty-four-ton quick-firing gun rushes through the air at the velocity of 4,900 feet per second, striking its object with a force equal to that of 11,230 tons falling one foot. And yet, comparatively speaking, they are harmless. Thus, during the one-day bombardment of Alexandria by the British fleet of twelve ships, lasting from 7 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., no less than 5,165 shells were thrown into the town, yet no more than 800 Egyptians were killed—that is, it took, roughly speaking, six shells to kill one man. Again, during the Franco-German war, the Germans threw 30,000 shells into Belfort, only killing sixty Frenchmen, or 500 shells to kill one Frenchman. At Strasburg, in the same war, it took eighteen shells to kill every man. And at the siege of Paris 110,000 shells only killed 107 and wounded 209.

CONVERSIONS IN ENGLAND.

We learn from the "Tablet" of London, England, that the official returns for the diocese of Westminster and Salford show that 2361 persons were received into the Catholic Church in the Year 1897. From this an idea may be gathered of the vast number of Converts throughout the whole of England that must have entered the one true fold during the period mentioned. When it is remembered that these converts are drawn largely, if not mainly, from the highest intellectual, professional and social ranks in a country where, from the so-called Reformation until comparatively recent times, the Catholic religion and those who professed it were held in almost universal detestation we can better appreciate the marvellous change that has come over the English mind in its attitude to Catholicism. Many causes are contributing to this happy condition of things. Among these one may be noted, namely, that the English people have, especially since the epoch known as the Oxford Movement, turned to a more serious study of the true history of the Reformation in their own Country and as a consequence thereof the great truth is beginning to gradually leaven the national mind that the church which to-day owns allegiance to Rome the centre of Catholic Unity is the true Church of Old England continuous and identical with that founded by St. Augustine in 597 and in which for almost a thousand years before the Reformation was thought of their Catholic forefathers had worshipped. And alongside the growth of this truth is the correlative one growing apace, namely, that the parliamentary religion, into an enforced acceptance of which the English people were dragged under the barbarous penal enactments that disgrace the statute books of the Reformation period, is but a pitiful human makeshift for the Catholic faith of which the nation had been robbed by its Reformation rulers and their associate conspirators. Anglicanism is to-day on its trial as it never was before and those who are closely following the trend of events in the Establishment, and note the state of religious anarchy prevailing there, as well as the utter and obvious absence of any authoritative voice capable of restoring harmony from the general chaos, require little more than ordinary penetration to discern that its very foundations are fast crumbling away.

Writing some 80 years ago Count de Maistre stated that history for the last 300 years (i. e. from the Reformation) has been one grand conspiracy against truth." Those who have read Newman's "Present position of Catholics in England" can appreciate the statement in its bearing on the Reformation in that country. But historical fictions, no matter by what power and prestige they may be bolstered up cannot endure forever. Magna est veritas et praevalabit. As has already been said the people of England are revising their history of the reformation and are getting at the true facts, which is but another way of saying that the long reign of misrepresentation, slander and

defamation of the Catholic religion in that country is approaching its close. As a natural result of this Catholics are coming by their own. They are no longer looked upon with distrust and suspicion, or regarded as aliens in their own country; and instead of their religion being held to be, as in the unhappy past, the badge of servitude and mental and moral debasement, "going over to Rome" has now become not only rather fashionable but is regarded as evidence of first-rate intellectual ability and high scholarly attainments in the person who thinks out his way there.

The number of persons who last year joined the Church in the two dioceses named, apart from the rest of England for which we have not seen the official returns, is abundant evidence that the prayers being offered for England's return to Catholic faith are bearing fruit, a consummation for which Catholics everywhere should fervently pray.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

We have nothing but hearty congratulations for the management of the Winnipeg Industrial Exhibition and praise for the excellence of their arrangements which culminated in the tremendous success of the past week. Of course in an event of this kind the weather plays an important part and fortunately the elements throughout the week were most favorable, the only possible ground for complaint in this respect being the extreme heat, which at times was certainly about all that human nature could endure. But weather is not the only consideration that enters into the success or failure of such a gigantic affair as the Winnipeg Exhibition has now grown to be. Unless the management be thoroughly up-to-date and abreast of the times visitors will be disappointed and the result will be disastrous not only to the future of the show itself but even to the reputation of the community in which it is held. The fact, therefore, that the tens of thousands of strangers who flocked to the city all went home thoroughly delighted with the fair is not only a proof of the able way in which the business is managed and of the completeness of all the arrangements, but it is a matter that vitally affects the best interests of Winnipeg itself and puts the whole population under a debt of gratitude to the Directors and their able and energetic manager, Mr. Heubach.

Whilst treating of this matter we would say that Mr. Heubach has now had the management of the Exhibition long enough to allow the public to thoroughly judge of wisdom or otherwise of the directors who selected him out of a large list of applicants for the position some few years ago; and there can be, and is, only one opinion on that subject. He has, indeed, proved to be exactly the man for the place and it is not saying too much to assert that the success achieved and the creditable manner in which everything is carried out without the slightest trouble are due to his excellent administration of the affairs of the association,

his tact in dealing with the public, and his executive ability in arranging details of the show. We are aware that this is the opinion of the general public and it must be a matter of satisfaction to Mr. Heubach to know that his efforts meet with such widespread approval. He is to be congratulated too, on having most able assistants in his general office staff every member of which seems to aim at satisfying everybody and, wonderful to say, apparently succeeds in doing so.

THE WORK OF RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS.

The "Semaine Religieuse," of Cambrai, gives some statistics which show how largely France is indebted to religious Congregations. There are in the country over 1,200 congregations, comprising 30,000 men and 150,000 women. These congregations impart instruction to two million children, without receiving from the budget a single sou. In Homes which they have established they support 100,000 old people, 28,000 of whom are maintained by the Little Sisters of the Poor. They educate 60,000 orphans, and the number of poor and helpless to whom they afford food and shelter in their refuges and hospitals may be set down at 250,000. Were the State to take charge of this indigent multitude, it would be compelled, on a moderate calculation and according to the rate of expenditure in the "laicised" hospitals, to devote to this purpose annually no less a sum than one hundred and twenty-five million francs. And yet the Government is ever seeking to place fresh imposts on these Congregations.—CATH. TIMES.

HUXLEY VERSUS PROTESTANTISM.

All the world knows that the apostles of Agnosticism have destroyed the frail foundations on which the "Reformation" compelled the heretics to base their Christianity and that they have made the stock Protestant arguments in favour of the truth of that religion simply ridiculous in the eyes of the reading public. The awkwardness of the position for members of the Church of England lies in the fact that the public, as represented by the Press, take the Agnostic philosophy seriously, but merely smile indulgently on even the mightiest champion of the neo-Anglicans. No efforts of the most learned Anglican can persuade the ordinary individual that he has any faculties to enable him to decide whether, for instance, God is the Author of the Scriptures or whether Our Lord's nature was both divine and human, or the latter alone. In consequence, since he has not the authority of the Church to teach him, he falls back on the Agnostic creed and adopts the opinions of the intellectual giants who framed it. Nor is he to blame, for did not St. Augustine declare that he should not believe the Gospel were he not moved thereto by the authority of the Catholic Church?—Catholic Times.

Rev. Fr. Amyote, O.M.I., went yesterday to Ste. Anne des Chenes.

AT LAST!

"Notes and Queries" is not a Catholic publication, and if it has a reputation for anything, it is for impartial scholarship. This makes all the more notable the recent statement in its pages regarding the character of King Henry the Eighth and the motives which swayed the bluff monarch in overthrowing Papal supremacy.

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"Notes and Queries" says:—
"One thing stands out clearly enough: Henry was a worse man than even his enemies have hitherto deemed him. For there was always a feeling that he might have to some extent persuaded himself that his first marriage was not good. That theory cannot now be held. It is also shown that he was not only willing but anxious to do anything whatever to please the Pope if only the Pope would declare the marriage not good. Had this been done, the Reformation would probably never have taken place."

Which exactly has been the Catholic contention all along. The controversialists do well to note that the contention no longer rests simply on Catholic statement. The article in "Notes and Queries" was inspired by a series of papers from the pen of Mr. James Gairdner in the "English Historical Review."—Preston Catholic News.

"THIS IS MY BODY."

London "Universe."
It was Adam Clarke and Horne who pretended that in the Syriac language which our Blessed Lord used there is no word that expresses "to signify," "to represent" or "to denote," and that hence the verb "is" or "to be" (in the words of the consecration found in the Gospel) has a figurative meaning. This became a very favourite argument with Protestants, and you will find it in their older controversial books. It disappeared when Nicholas Wiseman, then a young divine, published his "Syriac Hours" in which he shows that the Chaldeo-Syriac possesses no less than forty words which signify "to represent."

The English language has only four or five—the Greek and Latin about the same number. When "Syriac Hours" appeared, Dr. Lee, Oriental professor at Cambridge, wrote to say that Clarke and Horne were quite wrong in the statement they had made. He was compelled to this out of respect for his own reputation, but he was silent until the fabrication was "blown upon."

BABIES, BLESS 'EM.

Babies are usually young. Now and then specimens may be found of twenty years and over, but such are invariably babies on their honeymoon. Real, live, unmistakable, heard-a-mile off babies are always young. The others—the honeymoon kind—are only make believe and ought not to count when facts are being dealt with.

Babies have features. With a good microscope you can see baby's nose. It has a high forehead—one that goes right over to the back of its neck. A baby's