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CURRENT COMMENT

There is a man here that knows the new Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Falconio, very well. Rev. Father Lacasse, O. M. I., spent several weeks in his company at St. John's, Newfoundland, some 15 years ago. He says Mgr Falconio speaks English perfectly, looks 20 years younger than he is, and was even at that time thoroughly in touch with Canadian affairs. His Excellency, as we should henceforth call him, is a most genial, gentle person, wise and discreet and yet frank and engaging. His views, compared to those of the school represented by "Innominato," are as the poles asunder.

A propos of the Rev. B. F. Austin's recent conversion to Spiritualism and his sermon last Sunday in Winnipeg, if sincere men of his mental calibre were familiar with the records of spirit manifestations in the Catholic Church, they would not be so easily startled by the so-called revelations of professional mediums. There are numberless instances in the lives of the saints where the clearest and most definite communications are received from the other world, but never through persons who gain either money or notoriety by them. They all rest upon the testimony of real saints, and it is almost a definition of a saint that he or she will not under any provocation, and least of all for the satisfaction of vainglory, tell a lie or deceive in the slightest degree. Moreover, saints never reveal their communications with the spirit world except when obliged to do so through obedience to their directors, and they make the revelation with the greatest repugnance. How different is the case of amateur and professional mediums it is hardly necessary to point out.

Our two excellent Canadian contemporaries "The Casket" and "The True Witness" have come out in vigorous opposition to the library of literary treasures which the Montreal "Star" is booming. This is

simply one more of those one-sided Protestant collections in which all things Catholic are studiously suppressed. No collection of literary treasures is worth buying by a Catholic unless it is made by a Catholic. But even the best of them, made by the most intelligent and orthodox Catholic, is hardly worth buying at a bargain. Each one must collect his own library of Catholic books. One of the best guides to such a collection is the "Ave Maria," which, in each of its weekly issues, adds some new and sound Catholic work. In a library collected by other people than the reader himself, at least nine tenths of the matter must be wasted and left unread. Not so in the choice library you collect gradually yourself. Thus you have more profit both for your purse and your mind.

THE APOSTOLIC DELEGATION

The news of the establishment next month of a permanent Apostolic Delegate for Canada brings joy to the hearts of all those who sincerely desire the carrying out into practice of those educational principles so admirably laid down in the Holy Father's encyclical "Affari Vos." We gladly welcome the appointment to that high and important office of the Most Reverend Diomede Falconio, O. F. M., Archbishop of Acerenza and Matera. The fact that he is a fervent disciple of St. Francis, the Apostle of poverty and simplicity, will shield him from that fascination which the powers that be are wont to exercise over less spiritually minded men. We trust that his coming will at length lift the school question out of the political arena and at the same time prevent politicians from brewing it away as a troublesome matter.

The Franciscan Delegate will also doubtless give a fresh impulse to the Third Order of St. Francis which Leo XIII. so earnestly recommends to all the faithful.

ONE RESULT OF CATHOLIC TRAINING.

In "Picturesque Canada," part 7, (Ottawa), p. 183, Rev. Principal Grant, the Presbyterian Head of Queen's University, says:

"The French Canadian members (of Parliament), in consequence probably of the classical training that is the basis of their education, are far superior to their English-speaking 'confreres' in accuracy of expression and grace of style. Even when they speak in English, these qualities are noticeable."

THE FIRST MASS IN CANADA

"La Semaine Religieuse" announces that Monsieur Hautaux, sometime Minister of Foreign Affairs in France, has decided to offer to the Cathedral of Montreal, in the name of his Government, a painting representing a memorable event in Canadian history—the celebration of the first Mass in Canada, June 25, 1615. The offer has been accepted and its execution intrusted to Ernest Laurent, winner of the Roman prize of 1889. The painter, from a letter

written by him, seems aware of the grandeur of his subject, and will test his capacity in its fulfilment." We clip this item from the N. Y. Catholic News. The date is wrong. It ought to be September 7, 1535, when the first Mass was celebrated on Ile aux Coudres, on the north shore of the St. Lawrence about 50 miles below Quebec, during Jacques Cartier's second voyage to Canada. See "Jacques Cartier" by N. E. Dionne (Léger Brousseau, Québec 1889) p. 57. And even before that date Mass was said on the coast of Labrador on June 11th, feast of St. Barnabas, 1534, and in a bay of the Gaspé country called by the natives Checatica and which Jacques Cartier christened Jacques Cartier bay, we find in the discoverer's own notes that "one of the Chaplains"—which implies that there were several—"sang" Mass on June 14th, 1534. "Ibid.," pages 37 and 39.

But perhaps the event mentioned by the "Semaine Religieuse" is the first Mass said in the island of Montreal, by Father Vimont, Superior of the Jesuits in Canada, on the very day of his arrival there with Maisonneuve, May 17, 1642, the date of the foundation of Montreal, which Father Vimont called "Villeneuve" and for which he predicted a glorious future. In any case the "Semaine Religieuse" is wrong.

Since writing what precedes we have found the event to which the "Semaine Religieuse" refers. It must be the first Mass said in the newly founded town of Quebec by Father Dolbeau, a Franciscan of the order called Recollects. This is mentioned by Laverdière as the first Mass since Jacques Cartier's time. But, if one is in search of the first Mass since Jacques Cartier's time, why not take the first Mass said by Father Briard, S. J., soon after landing in Acadia, which is a part of what is now Canada, May 22nd 1611?

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Mr. Winkler, the curbstone preacher, who for six summers past has taken up his stand each Sunday evening at the corner of Main and McDermott streets, and has taught his peculiar doctrine regarding Immortality to thousands of passers by, is an able and courteous speaker, and when he invites questions and offers opportunities of discussion as he invariably does he is at least entitled to fair play and that same measure of gentlemanly consideration which he always extends to opponents.

People who do not want to hear him or to behave properly have full liberty to pass on their way, and if they stop to listen the sacredness of the subject should ensure good order and decent behavior. The conduct of the crowd has, however, for the past two Sunday evenings, been characterized by anything but decency and orderly conduct on the part of the audiences which have assembled, and on Sunday evening last the proceedings reached a point that called for the interference of the police. We are bound to say that this was not Mr. Winkler's fault, but we think the unseemly conduct of the crowd should suggest to him the advisability of discontinuing the discussion

of such sacred matters in the open air. It seems to us most deplorable to hear the sacred scriptures and the Holy names tossed about in debate amidst the laughter and jeers of a thoughtless gathering of street-walkers and whilst Mr. Winkler evidently feels that he has a mission to enlighten the world on the particular theories he has formed, he must realize that such scenes as have recently taken place make it desirable that he should devise some other means of reacting the multitude.

A private letter recently received from a former well-known resident of Winnipeg now in Dawson city gives a very dismal account of the conditions of existence for the average man in that far off portion of the Dominion. There is no doubt a great deal of gold in the district, and fortunes are yet to be dug out of the grounds, but according to this account the ordinary worker who has used up all his means in getting into the Klondike territory—and there are thousands there in this condition—is simply a prisoner in the country unable to get more than a bare and very uncomfortable subsistence and absolutely without any prospects of being able to get back again. Government officials do well in the Yukon, and so do those who "stand in" with them, but as it costs money to "stand in" with a government official out there, the percentage of those who have any chance at all of realizing the hopes which lead them to go into the country is very, very small. But according to the writer it is no longer a mere question of realizing hopes, but the deplorable consideration which stares many of them in the face is first how to exist and then how and when will they be able to return.

It is a real case with many—perhaps a majority—of those at present there, of having "burst their boats." Attracted by the glowing accounts which appeared in the Press hundreds gave up good positions, and raising what money they could spent it all in getting to Dawson and now find themselves almost destitute and obliged to work when they can get anything to at starvation wages.

A great many people have visited the exhibition of work at St. Mary's school during the past week and we are in a position to say that the exhibit has been a source of surprise and delight to all who have seen it. One of the most prominent visitors was the Ontario minister of Education, Hon. Mr. Ross, who not only seemed particularly pleased at what was laid before him but expressed himself as astonished at the extent of the programme of studies which is followed at this institution. What he and those members of the Public School Board who accompanied him thought of the building, we do not know, but we can well imagine that Mr. Ross, at any rate, must have left the school with a feeling of unalloyed contempt for the tyrannical majority which stubbornly persists in its refusal to do justice to the minority, and which in its bigotted intolerance

steals the money that should go to the erection and support of a building worthy of the high standard of education which is attained.

We have noticed with pleasure lately symptoms of independence of political control in the columns of the "Tribune" newspaper which if persevered in and carried to their logical conclusion will make that journal the real organ of the people.

There can be no doubt in the mind of any thoughtful citizen of the Dominion that there are elements in the party system of our parliamentarians which are a menace to the country. Now the least dangerous feature of the present state of affairs is the existence of a subsidized press, and so great has this evil become that of late readers can never be sure of getting a true and correct account of what is being done by the politicians. There is certainly room in Manitoba for a thoroughly independent paper, one which will give the public the real news of the day and will unflinchingly condemn wrong-doing and follow up the guilty parties, no matter who they may be. The Railway deals and the Franchise act which are at present agitating that Province are two matters which might well engage the attention of the "Tribune" whilst it is in its present humour. It is an outrage that the preparation of the voters' list should be surrounded by so much mystery, and some of the scandals connected with the carrying out of the Franchise law are really disgraceful. We repeat that in this matter the "Tribune" can, if it likes, do a great public service by letting the light of publicity into the dark doings of the registration clerks, and we venture to say that if at this particular stage in the history of Manitoba the "Tribune" shows real independence and a desire to "hew to the line" let the clips fall where they may, it will not only do a great public service, but will at the same time ensure for itself a lacking and profitable place in public esteem.

In the name of decency and in the interests of public morality we protest against the publication of the article to which the Free Press gave special prominence in its evening edition of Thursday, and which dealt with an alleged insult to the Queen that had appeared in a rival journal. We know many parents and heads of households who are highly indignant at this outrage committed by the Free Press, and well they may be, for when it is remembered that the Free Press goes into the homes of hundreds of citizens where it is read by ladies, young girls and growing boys, it is simply disgusting that for the sake of making a far-fetched point against a political opponent the managers of what was once known as "the great moral daily" should have the audacity to print such a glaringly suggestive article and print it in such a way that it was the most prominent item in the paper and so arranged that it necessarily caught the eye and was read by everyone—young and old, the pure as well as the debauched—into whose hands that issue