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Northwest Review.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12 1899

CURRENT COMMENT

It was reported some time ago that the Holy Father had received in audience the editor of "La Croix," which took against Dreyfus a stand that shocked the British public serenely unaware of its own ignorance. Now it turns out that the Assumptionist Fathers whom the Sovereign Pontiff received, had nothing to do with "La Croix," but were simply engaged in the Holy Land missions of the Assumptionist Order.

A number of gold coins of the year 379, A. D., have come to light in the Roman Forum. Most of them bear the effigy of Anthemius, and the inscription "D. N. Anthemius P. F. Au." on the obverse and on the reverse the figures of two legionaries bearing lances and a globe surmounted by a cross and encircled by the words, "Salus Reipublicae." These facts are taken from the Roman correspondence of the London "Tablet;" but there must be some mistake in the date. No Roman emperor of the fourth century bore the name of Anthemius; but there was an emperor of Rome named Anthemius Procopius (which latter name accounts for one of the initials in the above inscription,) who reigned from 467 to 472. He was the son-in-law of the eastern emperor, Marcian, whose name appears on some of the coins recently unearthed in the Roman forum. Anthemius was invested with the purple at the suggestion of Ricimer, but Anthemius and Ricimer soon quarrelled, and the latter, proclaiming Olybrius emperor, laid siege to Rome. The city was taken by storm, and Anthemius was slain. This would explain why the coins were found in a drain; they must have been thrown there during the hurry and terror of the storming of the city. This is an additional reason why the date on the coins is not likely to be 379, since no siege of Rome took place till 31 years after that. The date is probably 469, and the coins are of the fifth, not of the fourth century.

Despatches from the Transvaal continue to be extremely unsatisfactory. What was first announced as a great victory is gradually whittled down to an

exhibition of bravery with great loss of life. One good feature, however, of the more recent telegrams, is that the British troops seem to be advancing. But the contradictoriness of successive reports makes one wonder if we shall have ever learn the true history of this terrible war.

The Catholic World for December opens with a profusely illustrated article made up of extracts from the forthcoming "Life of our Lord Jesus Christ," by Father Elliott. It is a pity he has thought fit to push the spirit of up-to-dateness so far as to take all his illustrations from that over-estimated self-advertiser, J. J. Tissot. These pictures of the French self-styled convert, who professes to have put his whole soul into them after the minutest possible study of local Palestinian traditions, may be realistic, though we doubt even that, but they are certainly, for the most part, hideous, and frequently unreal. What, for instance, are those huge trees doing in the foreground of that scene purporting to represent the apparition of the Angel to the shepherds on the bleak hillside of Bethlehem? And how very unnatural it is for shepherds to be resting flat on their stomachs on the cold winter ground. Tissot succeeds in being startling. That is his only merit. His illustrations are neither instructive nor devotional. In the scene "Jesus among the doctors in the temple," the least conspicuous figure, in fact the only figure that is half hidden by the others and cannot be clearly seen, is that of the boy Jesus. How different from Hoffman's treatment of the same. Tissot, like most iconoclasts in art, sacrifices the essential, the important, to the accidental and trivial. He has no sense of proportion. His angels are caricatures, but his ugly men's heads are faithfully drawn. In details he excels, in perspective and general effect, he fails lamentably. The old masters cared little if they erred in some archaeological detail, provided their faces of Christ and the Madonna were divine. Tissot's Christs and Madonnas are meaningless and weak, while his executioners are typical blackguards. The old masters had genius; Tissot has the morbid fancy of the Japanese and the Chinese fondness for the grotesque. We sincerely hope Father Elliott will publish another edition without these horrible illustrations.

After such unlovely prints, whose unloveliness is increased by the ghastly green of the printer's ink, we turn with a gasp of relief to Donahoe's Christmas number with its touching, beautiful, winsome pictures of the Infant Jesus. And these pictures are but the frame to an article of great power, on "The Outlook from Bethlehem," by Father Pardow, late Provincial of the Society of Jesus. There is no padding here; each sentence is instinct with virile thought and flawless logic, Father Pardow slashes popular shibboleths with a two-edged sword, striking at all the religiosity of the fashionable non-Catholic world.

Deeply as all the citizens of

St. Boniface deplore the destruction by fire of Mr. S. A. D. Bertrand's residence on the very night after his election, we feel it incumbent on us to very strongly discredit the rumors of incendiarism to which this untimely accident gave rise. In doing so we simply repeat the conviction of the police authorities and of all those who know the usual happenings of election times. With so many half-drunken partisans celebrating their victory by burning brooms steeped in petroleum, it is a wonder more fires do not occur immediately after an election. And it is quite certain that in this case, as well as in the incipient fire happily extinguished a few days before in the Royal block, there is not a shred of evidence in the direction of wilful arson.

THE RESULT.

Amid the many surprises which the elections of last Thursday brought forth none was so startling as the Liberal vote of the three French Canadian counties. At first, this strange attitude on the part of Catholics towards a government which had persecuted them seemed inexplicable; but, on further examination of local reports and returns, this regrettable manifestation admits of explanation, though it can hardly be excused. In St. Boniface Mr. Bertrand's very small majority is amply accounted for by the abstention of several prominent Conservatives who could not bring themselves to vote for his opponent and by the Liberal vote of others won over by Mr. Bertrand's promises anent the school question. In Carillon what determined the choice of the Liberal candidate was the vote of over one hundred Germans who plumped against Hugh John's candidate because Mr. Macdonald had inserted into his platform that ill-advised plank exacting literary knowledge of English. Thus the Liberal majority in this county is distinctly due not to the French Canadian but to the German vote.

The triumph of the Liberal candidate in LaVerandrye is due also to the German vote. There could be no question as to the superior competency of the old member, Mr. Paré, as well as his lofty disinterestedness. The building of the South-eastern Railway must also have helped Greenway's supporters. Perhaps the most outrageous feature of the entire election was the fact that the French Canadian town of St. Jean Baptiste not only voted for Greenway, their sworn enemy, but gave a majority of two to Mulvey, the firebrand who boasted that he was willing to shoulder his musket against separate schools. We are aware that about 35 votes of this majority were given by Meunonites, but the remainder is still too large a residue for a Catholic town. After such an exhibition of idiocy we are prepared for the announcement that these queer Catholics allowed Mulvey's committee to use the C. M. B. A. hall!

Whatever may be the motives of these aberrations, it is a comfort to know that in four or five

other counties where the vote of our co-religionists had notable weight, they invariably voted against Greenway. In Winnipeg city especially men who on other occasions are pronounced Liberals worked like beavers for Hugh John, and probably not one in ten of the Winnipeg Catholics of the Liberal party voted for Cameron, McMillan or McIntyre.

MR. W. F. LUXTON.

A friend who lately visited the Twin Cities confirms the good news of Mr. Luxton's appointment as General Manager and Editor-in-Chief of the St. Paul "Globe." Hitherto he had been only General Manager, but a difference having arisen between him and the former editor, Mr. Luxton threatened to withdraw, and the proprietor, in order to secure his services, dismissed the other and gave Mr. Luxton complete control of this important journal. While congratulating our friend on this well deserved recognition of his worth, we cannot help contrasting the intelligence and discernment of that American newspaper proprietor with the imbecility of the proprietors who dismissed Mr. Luxton from the editorial chair of the Manitoba Free Press and put in his place the backboneless personages we wot of.

Independence in journalism was never carried to a higher degree of perfection than in Mr. Luxton. Though a Protestant and a Mason, he fought a long and glorious fight for the constitutionality of Catholic separate schools. His own tastes and early prejudices were against this stand; but the rank tyranny of the victorious and conscienceless government that introduced the unjust school law of 1890 revolted all the nobler instincts of his liberty-loving soul, and he fought them openly, persistently, irresistibly. So irresistible indeed was his almost daily onslaught during three years after the passing of that nefarious Act that, being unable to reply, they determined to silence him by famine. He was offered the alternative of dropping the school question or of resigning. A pretence was made that his advocacy of Catholic claims impaired the circulation of the Free Press, but the financial returns of his last year as editor-in-chief proved that the journal never had been so prosperous before. Nevertheless the proprietors insisted on his either becoming their tool or vacating the editorial chair. He manfully and in face of possible starvation chose the latter alternative.

By this heroism Mr. Luxton has won for himself the everlasting gratitude of his Catholic friends. His defence of our school rights in a series of masterly editorials suggested, day after day, by the progressive developments of the new educational iniquity, is a unique phenomenon in journalistic literature. No Catholic could have championed our cause so effectively as the Protestant founder and editor of the most valuable newspaper in Western Canada. That newspaper carried into every home of the great Northwest arguments in our favor that were simply unanswerable. To set the final seal on the dis-

interestedness of this defence there was needed but one thing—the consecration of unjust persecution. By facing poverty for our sakes Mr. Luxton stamped himself for all time as a fearless lover of justice.

He did suffer the pinchings of poverty for several years, and now we rejoice to see him in comparative comfort, though not in the affluent situation he once enjoyed here. At the same time it is painful to think that a man of his ability and strength of character should have to go to another country, not his own, in order to be rightly valued, and that our province should lose the services of one who knows and loves her so well.

This feeling of regret is intensified at the sorry spectacle afforded by those who succeeded Mr. Luxton as editors of the Free Press. With the exception of too brief a period in which Mr. Beeton, once Mr. Luxton's assistant, relieved the abject servility of the paper by flashes of independent thought, the editorial department has been, since Mr. Luxton's retirement, a drag on the paper's success. As a repository of general information and telegraphic news, and especially as a local reporting bureau, the Free Press has no superior in Canada; but its editorial page and all the departments with which the editor interferes, such as reports of political speeches, are proverbially untrustworthy. Most of its readers, after eagerly perusing its live pages, experience a feeling of nausea if they attempt to read the vapors of the journalistic mountebank whom the Tribune has so justly pilloried in its post-election editorials reproduced elsewhere in this issue.

Another class of persons will rejoice with us over an appointment that makes Mr. Luxton's return to Winnipeg a very improbable event. We allude to certain blatherskites whose hypocrisy and conceit Mr. Luxton was wont to impale wherever and whenever their fraudulent faces appeared above the public horizon. Of late they have revelled in impunity, but better days, we trust, are dawning for the general public.

Rev. Dr. Trudel has been laid up for a few days in St. Boniface hospital. He hopes to get out in a day or two.

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