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CURRENT COMMENT

"The Tablet" of January 30, is justly indignant at Lord Londonderry for his recent outburst of bigotry at an Orange meeting. On that occasion he said: "There is no question whatever of the creation of a Roman Catholic university. Let me say once and for all—and you may take it from me—that during the existence of the present government there will be no question whatever of the creation or foundation of a Roman Catholic university." The Tablet editor says "it would be hard to imagine anything much more unbecoming than the appearance of Lord Londonderry, a Cabinet Minister, among the gang of Orangemen who assembled last week in the Ulster Hall." No doubt the noble Marquis occupies in the cabinet "a position which corresponds to that of the proverbial fly in the amber;" he is in no sense a leader of public opinion; "but still the fact remains that he is a member of the Cabinet and so must be supposed to be familiar with at least the large outlines of their schemes of legislation." And the moment he chose for this insulting utterance is the "morrow of the Archbishop of Dublin's letter about the Irish university question, when the whole country is on the tip-toe of expectation to know in what way the Government propose to solve the problem which now, more than anything else, is answerable for the discontent and unrest of the people of Ireland."

Before Mr. Balfour became Prime Minister, but when he was already leader of the House of Commons, he said that it filled him "with dismay that Parliament should acquiesce in a condition of things which practically and substantially deprives two-thirds of the population (of Ireland) of higher educational advantages." Lord Cadogan, while he was viceroy, used these memorable words: "I am convinced that as long as you leave that question unsettled, as long as you do not intend to render justice to those who are not of the same religion as yourselves in this high and important matter, so long will Ireland have one grievance, and one serious grievance, which will be unredressed." And these are only two samples of similar opinions expressed by several Lord Lieutenants and Chief Secretaries, who all deplored the absence of a Catholic university, yet in the face of these avowals, the Marquis of Londonderry "not only lends his countenance to a crowd of besotted bigots, but he actually goes out of his way to heap ridicule upon the claim of the Catholics of Ireland to some equality of opportunity for the higher education of their sons. If it were indeed needful at the eleventh hour to dash the hopes of the Catholics of Ireland, surely it might have been done in a less offensive way than in a speech to a mob of exulting Orangemen." Our London contemporary "may well ask what business Lord Londonderry has in a cabinet presided over by Mr. Balfour," and that same contemporary might also logically ask whether or not this present Tory Cabinet with its present weak-kneed Prime Minister deserves its unconditional and ever apologetic support.

Spain seems to be on the eve of a great revolution. Of late years the Jacobin spirit, kindled and kept aflame by secret societies of the bitterest anti-Catholic type, has begun to permeate the Spanish working classes. Irreligion goes hand in hand with subversive socialism, and both are raised to a higher pitch of passion by the fervid temperament of a southern

nation. As yet these anarchical agitators are less numerous than the noise they make would lead us to suppose, and they are found chiefly among the cosmopolitan seaport towns and great hives of labor. But the electorate is becoming saturated with revolutionary doctrines and is learning to follow blindly in the wake of plausible ringleaders. Just now a crisis is provoked by the appointment of Mgr. Nozalea, ex-Archbishop of Manila, to the See of Valencia. The enemies of all religion have falsely charged the Archbishop with undue subservience to the United States authorities after they assumed the government of the Philippines. As the Spanish nation, so intensely patriotic, so proud of its glorious past, still groans under the humiliation of its terrible losses in the Antilles and the far east, this accusation, however false, may bring about an explosion of unreasoning national wrath. And how far a hot headed people may go, when, stung by the ripping up of old wounds, it breaks out into unjust recriminations, may be seen by the reproaches heaped upon the Queen-mother for her unfortunate conduct of the Spanish-American war. That she was unfortunate no one can deny; but that she did all in her power to avert that war, and would have succeeded in doing so, had President McKinley only had the manliness to make her last offer public, is matter of history. However, there is no reasoning with a mob hounded on by unscrupulous agitators, and we have reason to fear that the Most Catholic Kingdom is about to enter upon a stormy period of civil strife, with which the young king will hardly be able to cope.

The editor of the "Western Watchman," writes in his epigrammatic way:

"The successes of the Japanese in Asia recall the victories of the Boers in the opening of the South-African war. It was their initial successes that undid the Boers. No; it was their not following up, by bold raids their initial successes, that undid the Boers. The Japanese, better trained to all kinds of warfare by sea and land, are not likely to neglect the following up process."

More judicious are the same editor's views on the respective merits of the two contending parties, as set forth in the editorial we reproduce elsewhere, "Paganism's Last Ditch." We agree with him in marvelling at the general sympathy with Japan, a pagan nation, capable, as its past history shows, of appalling cruelty towards Christians, and liable, as we know from the way it treated the Chinese, to slough off, in the heat of battle, its thin coating of Western veneer.

In connection with some remarks we made last week about carnival skaters masquerading as nuns, is it not strange that the very people who so gladly welcome the "sweet-faced," "meek-faced," and "quiet-garbed" nun in their gay revels, solemnly and soberly protest against her sweetness, her meekness, and especially her quiet garb in the school room? If they welcome a counterfeit presentment of her in their play, why should they not give her own real self a still warmer welcome in what ought to be, according to them, the special habitat of sweetness, meekness and quiet?

"La Nouvelle France," which is now in its third year, has very kindly begun to exchange with us at its own request. We appreciate this kindness all the more because this Quebec monthly magazine is far above the ordinary level of

monthlies. The December issue presented a "Causerie Littéraire" by Father J. Camille Roy, which is really a masterpiece of historical criticism on two books lately published in the City of Quebec, Mr. Ernest Gagnon's "Louis Jolliet" and Mr. Ernest Myrand's "Frontenac et ses amis." Father Roy is as hearty in his praise as he is considerate and merciful in his blame. While equally at home in the fine points of French style and in the moot questions of Canadian history, he justly deprecates undue violence in controversy and preaching, both by example and precept, charitable criticism as the surest means of getting at the facts. Speaking from a pretty wide experience of contemporary reviews in the English language, we know of very few articles that can compare, in thoroughness and sincerity with Father Roy's.

The January number of "La Nouvelle France" has a more varied bill of fare. Mr. Raphael Gervais talks incisively on popular errors and prejudices, voicing the sound Catholic principles which this Review always advocates. In Father G. Bourassa's skilful hands the so-called prophecy of St. Malachy, giving a motto for each pope's reign till the end of the world, cuts a very sorry figure. There is left not a shred of its authenticity, nor even any real value in the vague mottoes that might apply to any number of similar circumstances. Mr. C. de Kirwan, a retired Inspector of the Forests of France, discourses learnedly on the fast diminishing timber resources of the world. His article, which fairly bristles with statistics gathered from all the countries of the globe, shows that this earth of ours is seriously threatened with a wood famine within the next hundred years. Canada might ultimately become the forest reserve for the entire globe, but only on condition that its entire resources in timber be properly husbanded, not squandered as they are now, and that some means be found to check those devastating forest fires which constitute a most dangerous menace to the world's wood supply. Father At continues his delightfully sarcastic chats on the grammatical and literary anarchy that is just now running riot in France. The last article contains some of Mr. Ernest Gagnon's views on the proper organ accompaniment of the Gregorian chant. His competence in musical matters is as well established as his literary fame, and when he tells us, in the preface to a forthcoming work on this subject, that his purpose is to set up a serviceable breakwater against the rising flood of bad taste and musical barbarism, we feel sure that he will realize his intentions.

The approaching Louisiana Purchase Exposition at St. Louis has revived the question of the discovery of the Mississippi river. De Soto first saw the Father of Waters in 1539, and his name is often mentioned as the discoverer of that great stream.

What then becomes of the claim made in favor of Marquette and Jolliet? General J. C. Black, in a discourse at Makinak on Aug. 1, 1900, answered that, although De Soto undoubtedly was the first to see the Mississippi, he died on its banks and did not make known his great discovery in Europe. Rumors thereof had reached the eastern hemisphere, but what little knowledge there was had disappeared before Marquette's time. His position was similar to that of Columbus with respect to the Icelandic discoverers of America. Their journeys were forgotten when Columbus undertook his. Their attempts at colonization did not last: his did. So Marquette had to

go through years of patient investigation till he was assured in 1673 that the great body of water was not an ocean, as Nicolet had thought, but an immense river. De Soto, who explored not more than one fourth of the lower reaches of the Mississippi, knew nothing of its sister stream, the Missouri, nor of its more northerly course and tributaries. General Black concludes: "The man who discovered the Mississippi was Pere Marquette; or, to speak more accurately, it was Marquette and Jolliet. Marquette not only discovered the great river, but he gave to Europe ethical, historical and geographical knowledge hitherto unknown; he pointed out the large tributaries which poured their volume of water into the Mississippi basin, thus connecting the interior with the gulf of Mexico. His work, and not De Soto's meets the requirements of the one who merits to be called in the strict sense of the word the discoverer of the Mississippi."

Cablegrams of a fortnight ago announced what purported to be the gist of Lord Wolseley's reply to Father McCarthy of this city, who had written that the noble lord owed his life to Archbishop Tache's prevention of a proposed annihilation of the Red River expedition. We have waited for the text of the ex-Commander-in-Chief's reply. It has now come to hand and is characteristically delusive. It is contained in this paragraph of the London "Daily Chronicle":—

"As regards the statement in the 'Daily Chronicle' of the 21st inst., as to the possibility of Riel attacking the military expedition sent from Canada to put down the rebellion inaugurated by that murderer, Lord Wolseley would like to say that it was a source of deep regret to all ranks belonging to the expedition that Riel and his supporters did not attack the advancing troops at any place during that long journey from Lake Superior to the Red River." It will be observed that the gallant Lord retracts none of the cruel epithets he applied to the illustrious Archbishop, neither does he notice Mr. Griffin's unanswerable defence of Mgr. Tache. All that he does is to regret that he and his men had no chance to fight Riel and his followers. Probably, in his overweening confidence, he was really spoiling for a fight. But very certainly the probable issue of that fight was an unknown quantity to him. Were he better acquainted with the later rebellion of 1885, fought under much less favorable surroundings and yet, for a time, astonishingly successful against overwhelming numbers, he might have had prudent doubts as to the results of that proposed ambush in the fastnesses of the Winnipeg River gorges. But as Kipling hints in his "Little Bobs" Lord Wolseley never misses an opportunity to "advertise." That, and not truthfulness or strategic ability, is the secret of his fame. The man who, with all the resources of the empire at his back, failed to save Gordon, can be no great General. But he knows how to write himself up and get others to do the same.

Persons and Facts

The Exposition Transportation Company, of St. Paul, have appointed Captain E. C. Anthony, an old time and well known Mississippi River steamboat man, their general manager, and P. D. Chandler general passenger agent. Mr. Chandler has been identified with shipping interests on the great lakes for some time. The insignia "Take your hotel with you" signifies the nature of the Company's project, which in addition to opera-

ting a line of palatial steamboats on the Mississippi next summer, contemplates the care of its patrons during their sojourn in St. Louis, by docking their boats near the fair grounds for several days. The people of the Northwest generally, know that the ideal way to travel to St. Louis is via the grand and picturesque "Father of Waters," and when there is added the advantage of securing their hotel accommodations prior to their departure, it would appear the new Company will have more applicants than they can accommodate.

The Catholic Club was "at home" to its friends on Tuesday evening. Proceedings started with a progressive pedro tourney, in which the prize winners were: Gentleman's prize, Thomas Jobin; ladies' prize, Miss M. Savage; consolation, Miss E. Emery. A musical programme was then introduced by F. W. Russell, president of the club, who occupied the chair. Among those taking part were: Miss Agnes Barry, Miss Kathleen Brownrigg, J. A. Barry, K. W. Gunne and Charles Lawes. After the programme the ladies served refreshments and a pleasant hour was spent. The At Home was voted by all present a great success.

A message of sympathy with Mrs. Moore in her sad bereavement has been received from the Irish Hierarchy in the following terms: "The Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland, assembled in general meeting on the 12th inst., in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, tender to Mrs. Moore their deepest and sincerest sympathy on the occasion of the lamented death of Count Moore, whose ready and generous co-operation was always available for every movement involving the interests of our Catholic people."

It is freely stated that Colonel Lynch's release was brought about through the intervention of the King. Although he has been released simply on licence, the authorities will not call upon him to report himself periodically as was done in the case of Mr. Michael Davitt. He will have full personal liberty, to the extent even of leaving England, if he so desires, but he is disqualified to sit in Parliament, or to be elected to any position of trust. Colonel Lynch has been longer in gaol than any "rebel" convicted in the Cape Colony or Natal.—Catholic Times, (England).

On Monday, January 25, the guard on duty at the Vatican arrested a stranger who was found wandering among the corridors of the Palace seeking to enter the Pope's apartments. The prisoner, who refused to answer any of the questions put to him, is believed to be a dangerous character who had designs on the Pope's life.

Sir Hugh MacDonnell, late British Minister to Portugal, died on Monday, Jan. 25, at his residence in London. He was in his 73rd year.

Last Sunday evening Rev. A. Chossegros, S.J., Professor of Rhetoric in St. Boniface College, gave a masterly lecture on "Lamartine." He emphasized the fact that this great French poet, who was for many years eclipsed by the transitory glory of Victor Hugo, is now recovering his deserved place as the greatest of French lyric poets. Mr. Brunetiere was the first to point out how far superior to Hugo he is in consecutiveness of thought, in harmony of verse, in true poetic inspiration. No doubt Lamartine has faults; for a time he lost faith in Christianity and three of his books are condemned