

Northwest Review.



THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH BETWEEN LONDON (ONTARIO) AND THE PACIFIC COAST

VOL. XX, No. 39.

WINNIPEG, SATURDAY, JULY 2, 1904

\$2.00 per year
\$1.50 if paid in advance
Single Copies 5 cents

CURRENT COMMENT

The English "Review of Reviews" for June, says: The "Dublin Review" publishes under the title, "Was Luther Insane?" a paper by Miss J. M. Stone. She quotes from the Catholic humanist, Cochran, that in his monkish period Luther, "appeared to the brethren to be of a strange humor, the result, they thought, either of diabolical possession, or of a tendency to epilepsy." Once during Mass Luther fell down in the midst of the choir raving and writhing, with shrieks. His alleged fights with the devil are adduced. In the Wartburg he was tormented by a thousand Satans, and declared the place was full of cunning demons. Miss Stone says: "In the realistic manner in which he describes these encounters, there is a latent probability in the view that his brain, never very well balanced, deprived gradually of its legitimate food and fed with the gloomy, hopeless theories of fatalism, became really diseased." The Protestant Haurath ascribed Luther's mental sufferings to convulsions or cramps of the main arteries. The writer (Miss Stone) closes with the query, "May not the true inwardness of the case lie in the term, mental aberration?"

"These remarks, by a Catholic writer," says the Review of Reviews, "may be set down to anti-Protestant prejudice. But in the London Quarterly Review, Mr. E. K. Kellett, writing on the Reformation, shows how Protestants are revising their views of the great movement from which they sprang. He says the Reformation was a middle class movement, and Luther and his coadjutors, 'might have been men of England of 1832, for all their sympathy with the peasants and their grievances.' The writer refers to Luther's furious denunciation of the unhappy peasants in revolt. 'He urged the princes to slay the rebels like dogs, and promised heaven to all who fell in the bloody work.' Mr. Kellett says of Luther, 'He had begun with a holy crusade against immorality, and in 1540 he gave a secret sanction to the bigamy of Philip of Hesse, and when the secret leaked out denied all knowledge of the transaction. When confronted with proofs he defended his falsehood in language worthy of a Jesuit. 'The secret 'yea,' he said, 'must for the sake of Christ's Church remain a public 'nay.' Thus far the Review of Reviews, which is, of course, jointly responsible with Mr. Kellett for the gratuitous fling at the Jesuits, but this pandering to popular ignorance and prejudice does not prevent this article, which we have quoted entire, from being, on Mr. W. T. Stead's part, a strong confirmation of the traditional Catholic view that Luther was deeply tainted with insanity and mendacity."

In the "Century" for June Mr. E. T. Seton has a good word to say for the much-maligned gopher, which he calls "The Master Plowman of the West." Darwin proved that earthworms are the makers of the black loam. But there are no earthworms south of the Saskatchewan and west of the Mississippi valley, except in the narrow humid belt along the Pacific Coast. How then is the black earth of Manitoba and Assiniboia produced? By many burrowing animals, the most important of which is the pocket-gopher. This burrowing rodent, with its stout, rat-like form, its powerful forelegs adapted for digging, and its large cheek-pouches opening outside of the mouth, forms tunnels from two to three inches wide by one and a half inches high, about a foot from the surface. It works day and night,

summer and winter. Mr. E. T. Seton has heard more than one Manitoba farmer say that he reckoned the yield was doubled when the gophers had turned up the ground. From investigations all over the region mentioned, the writer concludes that the gophers completely plough the surface of the country—that is, turn it all over to a depth of six or eight inches—at least once in two years. Mr. Seton prefers the gopher to the earthworm.

Darwin, he says, concluded that the earthworm in five years brings up soil enough to cover the ground one inch thick, and that, therefore, the result of its labor is of vast importance. I reckon that the pocket-gopher does this in five months. It does not do it in the same way nor so effectively, because the earthworm actually digests the substance of its castings; but it is evident that the pocket-gopher's method answers the purpose of fully disintegrating and mixing the dead vegetation with the soil to produce a rich and fertile black loam."

Gentle reader of the daily Winnipeg papers, you read no doubt last week of the "remarkable and weird performances" of the White Mahatma, how his mind-reading at the Y.M.C.A. Auditorium was "immensely clever," how the message from Sedley Blanchard, a well-known Winnipeg lawyer, who died nearly 20 years ago, was "inexplicable, bewildering, the climax to a series of most startling phenomena." You were doubtless impressed with this extraordinary manifestation of preternatural powers. Perhaps you even stifled an involuntary regret that you were not there. But those who were and had no journalistic axe to grind say it was a miserable fiasco. Scores of amateur entertainers in this city could have done the mind-reading tricks infinitely better. There were only two messages from the dead, one each night. The first was delivered to an unknown travelling physician, whose very name was given as Walters by the Free Press and Walton by the Telegram, and who was most probably a confederate, coached for the occasion, and acting his part rather better than the White Mahatma himself. The second message bearing the signature of Sedley Blanchard, was delivered to the Hon. Hugh John Macdonald, who admitted that the signature "was very like what he could remember of his dear old friend." Nothing was easier than for the White Mahatma, who spent several days in the city before his first performance, to secure a real signature of that well known lawyer and to imitate his writing sufficiently to be "very like what the Hon. Hugh John could remember." Rest assured, gentle reader, that there was nothing even remotely approaching the preternatural in the clumsy tricks of Mr. J. Randall Brown. We are far from denying that there may be real communications from the spirit world in some of these seances, in fact we hold that they are quite possible, only that in that case the spirits that communicate are not the souls of our dead friends, but evil spirits masquerading as human souls and deceiving, as they most easily can, the "fools rushing in where angels the "fools rushing in." But the White Mahatma's performances admit of most obvious natural explanations and call for no supernatural intervention.

We begin next week the publication of a famous Catholic historical novel, "Dion and the Sibyls," which is, in many respects, superior to "Ben Hur" and "Quo Vadis." All three are concerned with the beginning of the Christian era, but there are, both in General Law

Wallace's and in Sienkiewicz's work passages too dangerously realistic; Mr. Miles Gerald Keon is absolutely pure. Moreover, his classic lore is more correct, and true to historic reality. He was trained in the schools where classical traditions are best preserved, and afterwards added to the invaluable Stonyhurst training the ripe fruits of his own subsequent reading. The result is that, in point of Roman atmosphere at the time of Christ, the Irish author is immeasurably above both the American and the Pole. With the two latter that atmosphere is palpably fictitious, a sort of compressed-air process; with Keon the classical surroundings are as natural as the air one breathes every day. And in the matter of scenes that never quit the memory, the "taming of the Sejan horse" is far more dramatic than the famous chariot race in Ben Hur. To read such a book as "Dion and the Sibyls" is to get a liberal education, and that you get without extra cost, simply by reading your Catholic paper.

We often wondered at the zeal with which the "New Century," a high-toned Catholic weekly, published in the capital of the United States, assiduously and pathetically applied itself to the whitewashing of American officials in the Philippines. The mystery is now explained by the appointment of the former manager of that journal to the secretaryship of the Panama Canal Commission. On this significant fact the Philadelphia "Catholic Standard and Times" makes this sarcastic comment:

"The 'New Century' was not only the greatest Catholic paper in the world (as it claimed), but it was a most disinterested supporter of Mr. Secretary Root and Mr. Secretary Taft, and an indignant protester against the base charge of proselytizing in the Philippine schools. This disinterestedness failed to make the 'New Century' the great success it ought to have been. But it is consoling to know that, though failure overtook the noble ambition, the disinterestedness is not to be left entirely unrequited." The "Catholic Citizen," of Milwaukee, which has absorbed so many other Catholic journalistic ventures, has acquired control of the "New Century," and now issues it simultaneously from Washington and Milwaukee.

A correspondent writing to the "Notes and Queries" editor of the San Francisco "Leader" propounds the following grave and serious question:

"Query Editor—Dear Sir: What punishment do you think is fit for a man who eats pie with his knife? This is a serious question. Kindly answer it in the same spirit."

FASTIDIOUS.

The patient editor gives the following equally serious reply:

"Dear Fastidious: A man who can eat pie with a knife without cutting his mouth deserves one of Carnegie's medals for heroism. However, to punish him you might make him read the stuff called 'society items' in the great dailies."

Protestant writers charge Catholics with the absurdity of a vicious circle. But what is a vicious circle? A vicious circle is the using of two propositions, equally uncertain, to prove each other. Thus, Protestants claim that Catholics prove the authority of their scriptures by the infallibility of their church, and then prove the infallibility of their church from the authority of their scriptures. Dr. Mullaney meets this formidable statement in this manner:

"A Catholic argues with a person who believes in the authority of the scriptures, but does not believe in the doctrine of the

infallibility of the church. No one will tell us that the said Catholic is guilty of bad logic and is a sophist when he thus addresses such a person: 'Good Protestant neighbor, you acknowledge this book to be an authority: I shall show you from several passages thereof, that the church is infallible.' This is not a vicious circle, for there is no question between them of the authority of the scripture, and to such a person the Catholic does not prove the authority of the scriptures by the infallibility of the church. Hence, in this case, there is no vicious circle, for if he proves the infallibility of the church from the authority of the scripture, he only proves that which has been questioned, from that concerning which there was no dispute."

Persons and Facts

Mrs. O'Hara and her daughter, Mrs. Dr. Donovan, of Neche, were here Thursday of last week on a pleasure trip. They reported that Mrs. Lavigne, the mother of Neche's Catholic pastor, was very seriously ill.

The Catholic Club picnic last week was a great success in spite of the thunderstorm which brought it to a close.

Mr. Chas. Menu has arrived from Belgium and has brought with him about three hundred Belgian immigrants, most of whom are going to the Northwest. About fifty of them will settle in and around St. Boniface. Rev. Father Vanneste, of Bruges, intends to come over and offer his services to Archbishop Langevin, and hopes to bring with him nearly thirty of his relatives. The Belgian government greatly favors emigration to Canada.

When Sir Daniel and Lady McMillan came to review the St. Boniface College cadets they had as guests in their splendid carriage Capt. and Mrs. Gautier, and on their second visit to the College two days later for the closing exercises Mrs. N. Bawlf took the place of Mrs. Gautier.

Miss Madge McKinley, chief clerk of the Brandon Post Office, was here on Thursday visiting her friends in the city before going to enjoy a well earned two months' holiday with her mother and sisters at Prince Albert.

Mr. Clement Scott, the great dramatic critic and a convert to Catholicism, died last Saturday in London after a prolonged illness. A matinee which was given in His Majesty's theatre for Mr. Scott's benefit by distinguished actors and actresses on the previous Tuesday, netted \$6,250.

Among the Belgians who came here last week under the care of Mr. Charles Menu, Dominion Immigration Delegate to Belgium, several have considerable capital. One man brought with him \$50,000 in cash, another \$25,000, another \$3,000 and two others \$2,500 each. There are no paupers among them. The day after the arrival of 50 of them in St. Boniface, 48 had found work.

The Rev. William Wonnacott, late curate of St. John's, Bovey Tracey, England, has been received into the Church by the Rev. Charles R. Chase.

The Tablet calls the story about Dr. Laponi having been dismissed from the Vatican because he was found to be a Freemason "a particularly malignant canard," and adds: "up to a late hour this evening (June 5) Dr. Laponi was still

physician to Pius X. and had not yet become a Freemason, and there is not the least likelihood that he will either be dismissed or resign his position for another ten years at least." He has not much to do, however, except to recommend the Holy Father not to work so hard, and to take plenty of exercise in the Vatican gardens.

Clerical News.

The Rev. Geo. M. Searle has been elected Superior General of the Paulists to succeed the late Father Deshon. Thirty-six Fathers who have been in the order as priests for three years or more, voted in the general chapter held June 15 in New York. Father Searle is an Englishman, born in London 65 years ago. He was one year old when his parents came to the United States. He is a second cousin of Dr. Eliot, President of Harvard University and graduated there in 1857. While he was professor of Mathematics and Astronomy at the United States Naval Academy at Newport, he became a Catholic in 1862. In 1866 he went to Harvard University as assistant professor of astronomy and there remained till 1868, when he joined the Paulist order and was ordained priest in 1871. During his work with the United States Coast Survey, from 1859 to 1862, he discovered the Asteroid Pandora. He is the author of "Elements of Geometry," and a valued contributor to scientific journals on both sides of the Atlantic, but he is best known to Catholics as the author of "Plain Facts for Fair Minds." He was a warm friend of the late Jesuit Father Secchi, the eminent Roman astronomer, who at one time urged Father Searle's promotion to the Vatican Observatory.

A telegram received at Washington last Sunday from Manila announced the death there on that day of Archbishop Guadi. This gives a final quietus to the rumor that he was destined to succeed Archbishop Falconio as Delegate Apostolic to the United States.

Rev. Father Blain, S. J., is preaching the Jubilee mission at Lorette. Rev. Father Proulx, S. J., who returned from Ishpeming, Mich., on Tuesday, went that same evening to Lorette to assist Father Blain. Next week they will both preach the mission at St. Anne's.

Mr. Theophilus Pare took the soutane last Monday and is now an ecclesiastic living in the Archbishop's Palace.

Rev. Father Chaput, S. J., is preaching the jubilee mission at St. Felix, Dunrea.

News has been received in Montreal that Canon Archambault has been appointed first bishop of the diocese of Joliette.

THE RELIGIOUS CRISIS IN FRANCE.

The Parliamentary majority represents about one-quarter of the French people. The popular majority, 200,000, by which they obtained control of the Chamber, strangely enough is the number of government officials who have to vote as the administration determines. "French politics cannot be properly understood," writes Count de Mun, "if the preponderating influence which the authority of the administration exercises on the course of the elections is not appreciated. It is the natural result of excessive centralization, of the imperfect organization of the system of universal suffrage, of the immensity of the number of officials who are of necessity subject to ministerial influence."—Editorial in the Messenger for May.