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TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 1899

**CURRENT COMMENT**

We print in another column a valuable letter from Mr. W. J. Cluff to Rev. Father Lacombe, O.M.I., to which the Free Press, with a spirit of fair play that deserves high praise, gave prominence in its issue of Saturday last. This letter comes as a strong and altogether independent confirmation of Rev. Father Husson's letters in answer to the Free Press correspondent, "W. S. C.," who thus becomes the unwilling cause of well deserved honor to the Catholic missionaries of the Peace River country.

Apart from tiny, toy republics like San Marino and Andorra, where practically every man can acquaint himself with all the facts of every public measure, the only country where a truly representative government flourishes is the home and birthplace of modern democracy, England. Neither the Latin nor the German nations have any adequate notion of popular representation. The great republic, which plumes itself on "government of the people, by the people, for the people," is fast riveting the chains of its bondage to trusts, rings, bosses and occasional mob rule. And how far we ourselves are from that popular sensitiveness to injustice which is the touchstone of true democracy, is well brought out in one of our "Notes by the Way" in this issue.

Anent the appointment by the Holy Father of a new Spanish Cardinal, yesterday's Free Press says the Capuchin Father Jose Vives "will be the sixth Spanish cardinal in the sacred college, a number out of proportion to the dwindled influence of Spain, not only among the powers but in the Roman Catholic world." We cannot agree with our morning contemporary as to the dwindled influence of Spain in the Catholic world. Among all European tongues, the Spanish language is the most widely spoken in the world after English, and wherever it is spoken Catholicism prevails with its philosophy and theology. Now in the whole Catholic world

Spanish philosophers and theologians have no superiors. At the Vatican Council they were acknowledged to be the leaders in all discussions, though most Catholic prelates were unprepared for this revelation of Spanish acumen and erudition. And at the present moment the ablest works on the relations of science to religion are due to Spanish writers, who combine, in a very unusual degree, originality of conception and explanation with the strictest orthodoxy. The fact that Spain does not enjoy administrative success under the constitutional form of government, for which it is not suited, is no proof that it is inferior in intellect or morals. The power of popular self-government is akin to business ability. Neither supposes a high order of intelligence nor any lasting influence on the thought of mankind.

At the last University Council meeting, of which a fuller report will be found elsewhere, Rev. Dr. Sparling, principal of Wesley College, pointed out one great disadvantage arising from government control, namely, the fact that a government university does not attract donations. Nobody cares to contribute to a government institution. He cited in proof Toronto University, which had never received a cent from any other source than the government, whereas independent universities, like McGill, had been most generously supported by private munificence. These weighty remarks of the head of the Methodist College were carefully omitted in the reports of the three Winnipeg dailies, and indeed they were afterwards ignored by the speaker himself who, with that breezy contempt of consistency which distinguishes several members of the Council, voted for the measure that is to bring about that very government control which he so ably deprecated. The majority vote was made up of all the representatives of Convocation, Manitoba and Wesley Colleges, except Mr. Aikins and Mr. Somerset, and of Drs. Todd, Hutton and Bell, of the Medical College. Doctors Montgomery and Chown voted on the same side, but as representatives of Convocation. Only one of the four new government representatives on the Council, Mr. G. D. Wilson, voted, of course, for government control. The Chief Justice and Judge Richards were not present, and Mr. Perdue modestly refrained from voting on his first appearance. The minority vote comprised the Chancellor, all the representatives present of St. John's and St. Boniface Colleges, plus Mr. Aikins, Mr. Somerset and Dr. Jones, who seems to be the only medical representative capable of independent thought and action.

A "Constant Reader" wants to know if a successor to the late revered Bishop Durieu, whose lamented death was recorded last week, will soon be appointed. He is already appointed. The Right Reverend Augustine Dontenville, O.M.I., D.D., having been preconized Coadjutor, with right of succession, to Mgr. Durieu, O.M.I., April 3rd, 1897, became Bishop of New Westminster by the very fact of the late Bishop's death, and is now

the Ordinary of that diocese. While the faithful whites and Indians of that far western see are mourning the comparatively early demise of the saintly Bishop Durieu, who had not yet completed his sixty-ninth year, they are also rejoicing that the mantle of the venerable missionary prelate has fallen on the worthy and strong shoulders of a singularly gifted Bishop, who has just rounded off his forty-second summer. The latter, as our readers will remember, was consecrated in New Westminster on the 22nd of August, 1897, by our own beloved Archbishop.

Those whose memories can carry them back ten years will also call to mind how, at the First Council of the ecclesiastical Province of St. Boniface, in the summer of 1889, amid so imposing a gathering of venerable prelates, the air of simple, genuine holiness that distinguished Monseigneur Durieu impressed the bystanders with reverence for this apostolic man who had successfully evangelized fifteen Indian tribes. No wonder that his dear Indians, as we have recently learned, insisted on carrying out solemn funeral rites in their own fashion for their departed Father in God, besides the Requiem attended by the white population.

**NOTES BY THE WAY.**

Complaints are again being made regarding the regulations under which the doors of the Public Library are closed every evening at 8 o'clock, and for our part we would say that the governing body of this institution have apparently an entirely false conception of the purpose which the Library is intended to serve or they would certainly never have made this rule of early closing. They seem to act on the supposition that the city supports the Library for the benefit of the few and not for the masses, for it is an undeniable fact that during the months in which the eight o'clock closing time prevails, it is only citizens of comparative leisure and those who have very short hours of labor who can make any use of, or derive any benefit from, the Library. We can quite understand that it is right and proper that the Librarians should have reasonable hours of attendance, and as much as possible should be at liberty during the hot weather to enjoy the fresh air after sunset, but we think this could be advantageously arranged without entirely closing the door at an hour which absolutely debar the working classes from all participation in the benefits of the institution. This is an important matter and we would suggest that some of those who feel strongly about it—and we know the number is by no means a small one—take the necessary steps to lay their views before the management. We have no doubt if this is done some way will be found of meeting the wishes and consulting the interests of the public without doing any injustice to the librarians.

We are a democratic people, proud of our institutions, and apt to pride ourselves on the fact that we are not like unto others who live in older lands, and who, in theory, do not have

anything like the privileges we possess in the selection of their rulers and the making of their laws. We have used the words "in theory" advisably, for we are convinced that only a little consideration is needed to show that those on whom we exhaust our pity have, in many respects, much more freedom in the exercise of the ballot and much better security for good government than we have. It seems to us that just now Winnipeg is furnishing an excellent example of this. The parliament of Canada is sitting at Ottawa, making and amending the laws under which we are to be governed and to be taxed, and the citizens of Winnipeg, the chief centre of commerce and population in the west, have absolutely no representative. Does anyone imagine for a moment that an English constituency could be treated in this way? We venture to say that if the least important constituency in England was either by law or by the caprice of politicians deprived of representation at a meeting of the imperial Parliament such a fuss would be made about it that it would never happen again. But here in Winnipeg it seems to be taken as a matter of course, and in spite of all our fine theories about being the freest people on earth and the best governed we shall probably wait patiently until such time as the politicians in favor at Ottawa see fit to bring on the election. We have still a great many things to learn from the old country, and not the least important is the lesson to be fully alive to our privileges as British subjects and not remain, as we are now, the dupes and tools of politicians whose only aim and object is so to manipulate matters as to secure for themselves the longest possible lease of power and the continued control of the money bags of the country.

We note with pleasure that the "People's Voice," the excellent journal published in this city in the interests of the working man, approved of our recent declaration regarding the carpenters' strike. In that declaration we simply gave the Catholic doctrine on the labor question, and we very much wish that we could interest the working classes sufficiently to get them to examine with care the attitude of the Catholic Church on the social problems of the day. We are convinced that if working men as a whole could be induced to study the history of the Catholic Church in relation to labor and to listen to the advice of the Head of the Church to-day they would be taking the first step towards the real solution of the difficulties with which they now have to contend. In the Christian aspects of the labor question, in the social condition of the masses, in their struggle for life and shelter the active sympathy of the Catholic Church has ever been enlisted in favor of right against wrong. In every variety of condition in the past the Church has shielded and defended and liberated the workman from the tyranny and oppression of the ruling powers, and now in modern complications she is to the front in the labor question. Pope and bishop and priest are raising their voice as of old against greed,

luxury and oppression, and appealing for justice and Christian charity, and the Catholic Church is the only body that can rightly deal with the troubles, for she alone has long experience of the past, and she alone attempts to deal with the real sources of the evil.

The Hon. Mr. Blair, Minister of Railways, in stating in Parliament the other day that the Government would not interfere in the Grand Trunk strike, added that wages must depend upon "the law of supply and demand." This is an old and damnable doctrine of political economists and means that the wage being determined by the supply and demand for labor, the capitalist will give less and less according as the number of applicants increases. One can well understand what the position of working men in Canada is to be if this doctrine is to prevail. The Government is spending the money of the country with a freedom never before equalled to bring into Canada thousands upon thousands of the laboring classes and whilst the demand for labor may perhaps increase to a certain extent it is very evident that its growth will not be in any respect comparable to the supply of labor. If Mr. Blair's doctrine is to prevail it inevitably follows that wages in Canada must fall to a level which will be disastrous to the well being of our working men and injurious to all the mercantile interests of the country that depend upon the support of the wage-earners. We venture to say that taking everything into consideration no politician ever uttered a more cold-hearted expression on the floor of the House of Commons than that we have quoted from Mr. Blair and we shall be much surprised if it is not resented by the working men of Canada to the discomfiture of the Minister of Railways and his colleagues who, by their present policy, are first demoralizing the labor market of Canada and then, when asked to do something for working men, coldly reply "we can't help you; it is merely a case of supply and demand."

**THE LAST MEETING OF  
THE UNIVERSITY  
COUNCIL.**A SERVILE MAJORITY VOTE FOR  
GOVERNMENT CONTROL.

At the adjourned meeting of the University Council held on Friday, Mr. Aikins moved the resolution of which he had given notice, that an appeal be made to the Local Government to so change the Act that professors should be appointed by the Council and not by the Government. Needless to say that Mr. Aikins made a strong argument in favor of his case, indeed in any assembly that was open to conviction his logical presentation of the dangers of Government control would have carried the day. In vivid language he sketched the proceedings of the Council and their dealings with the Government during the past few years down to the present time, pointing out how again and again the majority had been warned whither they were drifting and how they had blindly persisted in their fatal course until now they were face to face