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Northwest Review.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1899

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Our subscribers will be pleased to learn that we are reducing the subscription price. Henceforth, all who pay IN ADVANCE will be charged only ONE DOLLAR A YEAR. Those who do not pay in advance will have to pay the old price, two dollars a year. These latter need reminding that the Holy Father and the Bishops of the Church are continually inculcating on the faithful the duty of supporting the Catholic press. And no careful reader of our columns can fail to observe how many things they contain which, though vitally interesting, are purposely ignored by the secular press.

CURRENT COMMENT

The American yellow journals drove McKinley into war with Spain, and now the English popular press, not content with bringing about this bitter South African war, is daily adding fresh fuel to the fires of national revenge. This is virtually dechristianizing a people that deem themselves model Christians. Nothing is so thoroughly heathen, so contemptible to the true Christian as the bestial spirit of revenge.

Cardinal Mathieu, when recently taking possession of his cardinalial title of Saint Sabina in Rome, drew a forceful picture of Christian France, saying: "France is worth far more than the reputation she is daily making for herself by her polemics and what her continual agitation leads to suppose. We must not judge her by the surface. As the depths of the ocean conceal inexhaustible treasures of life, so she holds in reserve an extraordinary amount of good sense, of capability for work, and of active and generous piety. This gives her a place apart among Christian nations. What other country maintains an army of more than 40,000 priests, presents to the eyes of angels an ornament of more than 1,000,000 nuns, spends yearly several million francs for the propagation of the faith, sends missionaries to spread the Gospel from the Black Continent to the Polar re-

gions, and this often at the expense of their lives?"

Look out for a grand display of celestial fireworks during the nights of the 13th, 14th and 15th of this month. The famous shower of falling stars through which our earth passes once in thirty-three years is due this year, 1899, about the middle of November. The last time this gorgeous sight appeared was Nov. 13-14, 1866. Sir Robert S. Ball, who witnessed it, says the meteors were distinguished not only by their enormous multitude—several thousands in two hours—but by their intrinsic magnificence. The best time to observe is between midnight and the sunrise twilight. Clouded skies can shut out the view, and as the moon will be very nearly full on Nov. 14 (full moon occurs on Nov. 17) her light will certainly obscure the faint trails of many shooting stars. But, as the moon sets on Nov. 14 at 4.19 a.m., and on Nov. 15 at 5.38, there will be on the former date a couple hours of moonless starlight and in the latter almost an hour, before the dawn; so that early risers will catch the show. These shooting stars are cold dark bodies which, dashing into the earth's atmosphere at the rate of 25 miles a second, instantly become heated to a temperature of many thousand degrees, blaze out for a few moments and then evaporate completely. "There are several elements of uncertainty," writes Prof. J. J. Ross, of Columbia University, in the N. Y. Sun, "about the time of the coming of the shower. It may come a little earlier or later than Nov. 14-15, and some unknown effect of the planetary pulls may so disturb the motion of the swarm that it may decline to put in an appearance at all this year. If so, the astronomer is quite certain that he will see the display in the last year of the present century, November, 1900. When one sees the grand shower the words of the Psalmist will come to mind: 'The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork.'"

A noble example of practical piety was given the other day by the relatives of the late Miss Margaret Mary Josephine Purcell, sister of Mr. Justice Purcell, "whose name," says the True Witness, "is a household word in almost every Irish Catholic family in Montreal." The obituary notice which announced the death and the day of the burial, contained the following truly Catholic request: "No flowers, but prayers and Masses." This is real Christian charity, and the lesson is all the more timely as it was given on the eve of the month of November, consecrated to prayer for the souls in Purgatory.

There are only two dogmas taught by the Catholic Church on Purgatory, as the Council of Trent (Sess. 25) tells us. The first is that there is a state called Purgatory; the second is that the souls detained therein are helped by the prayers of the faithful and especially by the "acceptable sacrifice of the altar." Thus the Church solemnly teaches that the best way to assist our departed friends and relatives is the offering of the Holy

Sacrifice. And yet how many well-to-do Catholics allow the whole month of November to slip by without getting one Mass said for their nearest and dearest? Those who are too poor to pay the required stipend should at least strive to hear Mass on week days at least once a week and, if possible, every day. In this respect our cathedral town of St. Boniface sets a fine example to the rest of the diocese. The week day Masses are regularly attended by the best people of St. Boniface, who seem fully to realize that the faithful who are present at Mass really offer this acceptable sacrifice in union with the priest, according to those words of the Memento of the Living: "Be mindful, O Lord... of all here present... for whom we offer or who offer up to Thee this Sacrifice of praise."

"The Lounger" in *Towu Topics* does not quite understand our note on the absence of religious prejudice in "Richard Carvel." On re-reading that note we confess that our idea may not have been expressed with sufficient clearness for a reader who had never perused Mr. Winston Churchill's beautiful story. For the benefit of such a one we should have premised that the tale purports to be told by its hero, who is therefore supposed to be impregnated with the atmosphere of his time, 1770-1780. Mr. Churchill has indeed caught that atmosphere admirably, but he has purposely eliminated therefrom its odious element of religious prejudice against Catholics. He is careful to speak of them as they like to be spoken of, not as "Roman Catholics," but as "Catholics" pure and simple, there being but one religion which everybody recognizes under that one name, although others try to appropriate it by tacking on modifiers. This, taken in connection with the great popularity of "Richard Carvel," we called "a hopeful sign of a growing disposition to be fair to Catholicism." Common courtesy to Catholics is, of course, not rare in our own day, but it was extremely rare in 1780.

The contrast between the Hon. Charles Fitzpatrick's sketch of Transvaal history and Mr. W. T. Stead's "South Africa Catechism" in the October "Review of Reviews" is certainly very striking. The former sees but one side of the question and sees that in a distorted way. The latter, being an Englishman, can afford to be honest without fearing to be suspected of disloyalty, and he gives both sides with statistics and dates which are either wanting or wrong in Mr. Fitzpatrick's special plea. Mr. Stead's sketch is a record of broken promises, hypocrisy, bungling and greed on the one hand and of a fierce and occasionally brutal fight for independence on the other. His statistics are somewhat startling. He says there are in South Africa about 400,000 people who speak Cape Dutch and only about 300,000 who speak English. The majority of the Boers, about a quarter of a million, live in the Cape Colony; less than 100,000 in the Transvaal; 50,000 are in the Orange Free State.

The promptness and courtesy

with which Mr. George Johnson, Dominion Statistician, has replied, in a letter published in this issue, to our recent criticism of a date in the Statistical Year-Book for 1898 shows how well he manages the affairs of his department and emboldens us to submit another little perplexity to him. From page 555 of the same book we gather the following figures founded upon the census of 1891:

| | Per thousand. | |
|-------------------|---------------|-------------|
| | Birth rate. | Death rate. |
| British Columbia | 23.16 | 13.04 |
| Manitoba..... | 32.53 | 19.36 |
| New Brunswick | 27.70 | 13.36 |
| Nova Scotia..... | 25.41 | 14.57 |
| Ontario..... | 24.50 | 11.30 |
| Quebec..... | 36.86 | 18.91 |
| P. E. Island..... | 24.45 | 12.26 |
| N.W. Territories | 24.98 | 7.32 |

And, immediately after these figures we come across this inexplicable assertion: "Manitoba is the banner province, having the second largest birth rate and the second lowest death rate, the result being that the prairie province has the largest excess of births over deaths." According to the figures on which this assertion seems to be based Manitoba has indeed the second largest birth rate, but it has the highest death rate of all the eight divisions of the Dominion; and, far from having the largest excess of births over deaths it is surpassed in this respect by New Brunswick, Ontario, the N. W. Territories and especially by Quebec, whose excess of births over deaths surpasses that of the best of the other provinces by about 35 per cent, so that it is incomparably above them. True, the N. W. Territories' excess of births over deaths approaches that of Quebec, but the immense increase in Northwest population nullifies statistics of the territories taken almost ten years ago. We should like Mr. Johnson to explain the assertion about Manitoba. Much as we love our province, we want to see her credentials all right.

Our correspondent "M. T." misinterprets our quotation of Oct. 11th from the "Midland Review." The "howling of the press" may have simply intensified the "sense of justice" of the judges, just as the very absurdity of some calumnies against the Church has led many Protestants first to examine her claims and then to admit them.

One of the most remarkable instances of a head turned by the Dreyfusard heroics is that of Mr. St. George Mivart. He writes a long letter to the Times blaming the Pope for not having issued a pronouncement in favor of Dreyfus; he calls the latter the Galileo of the 19th century and speaks of the stupidity of the Roman congregations. Mr. Mivart, though the author of some of the most uncompromisingly and fearlessly Catholic statements ever uttered in the English language, is subject to these fits of temporary aberration. This time he needs praying for that he may not make shipwreck of the faith. But how ridiculous it is thus to fly off into a passion as if there were but one possible view of the Dreyfus case when that ablest of newspaper correspondents, Mr. G. W. Stevens, was converted to the opposite view by being a spectator of the Rennes trial.

LIP-FIGHTERS.

There is a vast deal of humbug about enlisting for real war. The immense majority of the men who volunteered in and around Winnipeg were physically unfit and many of them probably knew they were before they presented themselves for examination. It was a cheap way of getting the glory of a desire to fight. On the other hand, shrewd observers of the great crowd assembled to bid good-bye to the contingent noticed that quite a number of young broad-chested six-footers prudently confined themselves to shouting lustily for the Manitoba Transvaal boys, while not one of the latter had the average height or chest development of our city police. But it appears that in staid, matter-of-fact, Nova Scotia they did not even keep up appearances in our western way. This is what The Observer in the Casket tells us of their slowness in enlisting:

After the expressions of lip-loyalty in the Montreal Star from so many of the mayors of Canada we were hardly prepared for the complaints in two or three numbers of the Halifax Herald last week, of the slowness in enlisting. In fact, we thought that, as there was only a limited number of men required, the mayors would have a monopoly of the whole regiment. Imagine, then, our surprise, when, on the names of the volunteers being printed in the Herald, not one appeared from the town whose mayor had declared in the Star that he voiced the sentiments of the people of eastern Nova Scotia. The patriotism of these officials bears a striking resemblance to that of the late lamented Artemus Ward, who expressed his willingness to sacrifice all his wife's relations upon the altar of his country.

THE OBLATES IN SOUTH AFRICA.

There are 89 and soon will be 96 Oblate Fathers (seven having recently embarked) in South Africa. In the vicariate of Natal there are 34, of whom 8, Bishop Jolivet and 7 Fathers, reside in Pietermaritzburg, six at Durban and two at Ladysmith. In the vicariate of Orange Free State there are 17, of whom six, Bishop Gaughren and five Fathers reside at Kimberley and one at Mafeking. In the vicariate of Transvaal there are 16, of whom six, Rev. Father De Lacy and five other Fathers, reside in Johannesburg, and four in Pretoria. In the vicariate of Basutoland there are 21, of whom Rev. Father Cenez and eleven other Fathers reside at Roma. In the prefecture of Cimbebasia, chief residence Windhoek, there are 10 Fathers under the Prefect, Rev. Father Hermann, O. M. I.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

A local paragraph in the daily papers last week conveyed to the public the information that another dead body had been fished out of the Red River, this making the sixth case of infanticide reported in the city during the past few months. This means that there have been at least six murders committed within our boundaries and we should like to know where this thing is going to stop, and are the authorities taking any step to stop it? When Jack the Ripper was carrying on his infernal