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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1905

Calendar for Next Week.

FEBRUARY

- 5—Fifth Sunday after Epiphany. St. Agatha, Virgin, Martyr. Solemnity of the Purification.
- 6—Monday—St. Titus, Bishop.
- 7—St. Romuald, Abbot.
- 8—Wednesday—St. John of Matha, Confessor.
- 9—Thursday—St. Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop, Doctor.
- 10—Friday—St. Scholastica, Virgin.
- 11—Saturday—The first apparition of Our Lady at Lourdes. Commemoration of St. Raymond of Pennafort, transferred from Jan. 23.

OUR GREAT DISCOVERER.

On the 29th ult. Mr. Justice Prud'homme delivered a very remarkable lecture on Pierre Gualtier de Varennes de la Verandrye, the discoverer of the plains of Manitoba and the Northwest. The occasion was a meeting of the Alliance Nationale, a flourishing French Canadian Society. The audience was a select gathering of members in the Salle Couture, with several distinguished guests, first among whom was His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface. Other clergymen present were the Very Rev. F. A. Dugas, V.G., Rev. Dr. Beliveau, Rev. J. Dugas, S.J., Rev. Fr. Boutin, F.M.I., Rev. Lewis Drummond, S.J., and two Brothers of the Cross. The proceedings opened with a well worded address of welcome to Mgr. Langevin, read by Mr. H. Beliveau, president of the local branch of the Alliance Nationale. After some routine business, Judge Prud'homme began his lecture by disclaiming any attempt at a formal discourse. He was merely, he said, going to give a familiar talk (causerie) on the achievements of the great discoverer. But it turned out something far more soul stirring than a mere causerie. For nearly two hours the lecturer held his audience with a most dramatic narrative. Though he had notes before him, he never looked at them, but left them on the table. For he needed them not. One felt in listening to him that here was a man thoroughly master of his subject, not an ordinary lecturer who has crammed for the occasion, but a real historian who seemed to live and move and have his being among the men, white and red, and the scenes of the first half of the eighteenth century. So full was he of varied and uncommon information on all aspects of his theme that he occasionally interjected charming bits of local lore adding greatly to the vividness of the whole story. But he never wandered from his all absorbing topic, the heroism of LaVerandrye, to whom he fitly applied Horace's description of the "Justum et tenacem propositi virum," the man of just and inflexible purpose, whom the ruins of a broken world would leave undaunted—"impavidum ferientruinae." The speaker has preserved all the eagerness, earnestness and enthusiasm of youth. His gestures and tones are extremely natural and evidently unstudied. One could hardly believe that one was listening to a judge with more than twenty years of noble service on the bench. And yet there was, too, underlying all this captivating delivery, the judicial calm of the impartial, but not soulless, historian. He weighed and sifted evidence with the keenness of an able legist. Thus he opined, as against Margry, that the place whence La Verandrye's sons viewed the Rocky Mountains was not the Yellowstone region, but the present site of Calgary, and the reason he gave showed great familiarity with Indian customs.

While postponing a summary of the learned Judge's lecture to some future occasion when he will, as we understand, consent to repeat it before a larger audience, we take this opportunity of recommending all who understand French to come and hear this critical and dramatic sketch of the great French Canadian discoverer. Judge Prud'homme closed his lecture with the hope that the La Verandrye monument, the foundation of which has been long ago laid in front of the Provencher Academy, St. Boniface, may soon be raised. This wish was earnestly seconded by His Grace when he complimented the Judge on his fascinating talk which had, he said, dispelled the bad headache from which he (the Archbishop) suffered before the lecture. Moreover Mgr. Langevin warned his hearers that if they did not begin to move very soon in this matter Winnipeg might get ahead of St. Boniface, for several patriotic Winnipeggers were already talking of erecting a statue to the intrepid explorer, whom they all had a national interest in, since La Verandrye was not a native of Europe like all the discoverers before him, but a native of Three Rivers in Canada.

FRANCE AND THE VATICAN.

By the Rt. Rev. A. F. Gasquet, O.S.B.

(Concluded.)

The case of some was peculiar. Their submission to the law was really the result of a scrupulous wish to obey the State and they asked for authorisation, not because they thought they needed it or that they did not in fact possess it; it was the natural result of the exact advice given by M. Waldeck-Rousseau to the religious Congregations of Savoy, June 28, 1901. "I think," he said, "that it would be prudent for them, as indeed for all who are in any peculiar condition, to ask for the authorisation which will insure them against every kind of risk." May I take as an example the case of the College Anglais, Douai. The English Benedictine monks had carried on an English College here for more than three quarters of a century. The property was British and had been almost continuously in the possession of our Congregation since the beginning of the seventeenth century. Even in the "Reign of Terror" its property had been respected as that of English subjects, even when in that terrible time French religious houses were dissolved and their goods confiscated, it was spared until the outbreak of the war between the two countries, when it was seized not because the monks were monks, but because they were English. On the restoration of the property after the "Treaty of Paris," the recovered property was administered by a Bureau in the capital as British property, and the students were, since 1826, appointed to the various burses established in the College with the full knowledge and approbation of the French Minister of the Interior. The existence of the College was thus constantly brought before the officers of the State and received their official sanction, and these constant dealings with them would, it might be supposed, have alone constituted an authorisation in itself. Moreover, not so many years ago it was necessary to obtain a lease of the buildings at Douai from the Bureau for the purpose of carrying on the school, purchasing a play-ground and modernising the entire establishment. This lease was approved and signed by the President of the Republic—M. Carnot—and by the Ministers of Public Instruction and the interior. On the faith of this document—which we naturally supposed pledged the French Government—we spent a large sum of money—not less than twenty-five thousand pounds (\$120,000) on improvements of various kinds. As ours was in some way considered a special position, it was thought prudent to take the advice of M. Waldeck-Rousseau and to apply "for the authorisation which would insure (us) against all risk." Personally, I will confess it, I never imagined that this application was more than a mere matter of form, and that in due course we should receive the authorisation. The result was that our application was not even considered. We were executed with the rest "en bloc," and the first intimation that we really received of our fate was the appearance of the liquidator at the English College gates, who proceeded at once to the seizure of our goods and chattels, though we were British subjects. To-day the actual state of the case is this, that in spite of the State lease, which has yet many

years to run, our property has been sold, our improvements confiscated and our movable goods sold by public auction. We ourselves have not received one cent, though every penny was really British money.

The whole process of the suppression of the religious orders in France has been equally arbitrary and unjust, for Douai is but a sample of an immense number of religious houses. M. Combes arranges things as he pleases by a "sic volo sic jubeo." Just as it pleased him, by a stroke of the pen, to close four thousand free schools, so it pleased him, in assigning to the Senate and the Chamber the demands for authorisation (which were to be divided between them), to hand six to the former, which would have regarded the applications from a more just standpoint, and fifty-four to the latter. The accompanying suggestion sent to the Chamber of Deputies, for the rejection of them all "en bloc" was agreed to without difficulty or delay, and the "right of control of the Senate," which exists theoretically according to the Constitution of the Republic, was in this case and by this Parliamentary coup d'etat, ignored. The matter was made simplicity itself by the action of M. Rabier, the 'reporter' of the measure before the Chamber of Deputies. "Of what use is it" he asked in substance, "to discuss the ends and objects of the Congregations who have asked for authorisation? We have no call to judge them as we do not mean to authorise them. Our intention is to condemn them and to refuse their application, and so to destroy them under the new law." Such was the view taken by M. Combes' majority; and thus all those, who at M. Waldeck-Rousseau's invitation and on his explicit advice had presented themselves for "regularisation," found their petitions rudely dismissed without consideration. M. Waldeck-Rousseau, the originator of this law, has lately died, but not before he had uttered his protest in the Senate and elsewhere against the work of the Combes' Ministry. In the Chamber, and in the Senate in 1901 he defended his law on the sole ground that authorisation would be granted or refused on the merits of each case, and he rejected indignantly an amendment which proposed the suppression of all existing non-authorized congregations. In the Senate in reply to a suggestion that there was a "parti pris" and that by the brute force of a majority the Orders would be condemned, precisely because they were Orders, M. Waldeck-Rousseau exclaimed: "As to saying that Parliament will not grant authorisation, in my opinion this is to make short work of its functions. Can you believe that the French Chambers, in face of honest statutes showing openly a reasonable, philanthropic end or one of social interest, will be animated by any absolute 'parti pris,' and will say: 'This is a congregation, we refuse it authorisation?'"

M. Waldeck-Rousseau's speeches also, that were posted up in every Commune of France, bear witness to his personal pledges in this matter, and to his reiterated promises in regard to authorisation. The electors of France, on the strength of his declarations, were assured again and again by candidates soliciting their votes that the government had no thought of suppressing the religious congregations in France and that it was in fact pledged to authorise those that would merely obey the new law and take the necessary steps to regulate their position. It is a complete misrepresentation to say, as so many journals have done, that M. Combes was returned to power with a large majority on purpose to decree the abolition of the religious Orders, and that in refusing to grant the authorisation asked by them, he was merely carrying out the mandate he had received from the country. This issue was never be-

fore the Electorate at all; on the contrary, in every part of France the voters had before their eyes in the bills posted up by the authority of the Parliament, M. Waldeck-Rousseau's distinct promises in regard to the authorisation, and his indignant denials that any measure of suppression was intended; and if they could have had any doubts upon the matter at all, these were set at rest by the same pledges given by those that sought their suffrages. In an eloquent passage of his pamphlet on the situation, M. le Comte de Mun describes the unfortunate result of the complete confidence in the justice and honest dealing of M. Waldeck-Rousseau and his successor, M. Combes. "The flood (let loose by the former) is passing on its way sweeping all religious men and women away in a sad and glorious medley, along the obscure paths of proscription, confiscation and exile, on which those others whom the first blast of the tempest had uprooted had already preceded them. It is a multitude of innocent victims that we see; a crowd of men of all ages guilty only of being faithful to the name they bear and to the religious habit that clothes them. They are there—fifteen or twenty thousand of them—up to the last moment occupied only in serving their God, in praying to Him, in teaching His law, in educating the children of the people, in serving the sick and visiting the poor, or in spreading abroad in every land under the heavens the name of Jesus and that of France."

Then come the nuns. Already the refusal of authorisation has come upon them as upon their brethren in religion. Thousands of poor, unfortunate ladies have been turned adrift into the world whose only fault is that they have associated together to serve God in prayer and by their good works. Thousands of them have grown old in the cloister and they are unfitted to begin life again

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