

SMITH VS. FROUDE.

In our last issue we referred to Goldwin Smith's exceptional article, in the December North American Review, in which he rakes the late James Anthony Froude in a most unmerciful manner. There are a few remarks made by the erudite professor that may prove of interest, and perhaps of great use, later on, and we purpose taking note of them this week. The more remarkable are they in as much as, they come from one who was never partial to Catholicity, and that they seem to have been wrung from him by the all-over-powering desire to find fault with the very faulty historian (?) Froude.

"In dealing with the case of Catherine of Aragon," says Goldwin Smith, "Froude constantly assumed that the Pope had power to grant a divorce, and ought to have exercised it in order to secure the succession of the Crown of England. But the Pope had no such power. Marriage, in the Roman Catholic Church, when solemnized between baptised persons and consummated, is indissoluble." Mr. Smith knowing this so well should be able to understand that no Catholic legislator is justified in voting for, or assisting in any way, the creation of a divorce law or a divorce bill. Yet with all his logic and good English, he can understand the attitude of the Catholic Church when it suits his purposes—such as in the severe criticism of Froude—but fails to carry his own arguments to their logical conclusion when a simple matter of legislation by a particular state arises.

After dealing most severely with the case of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, giving Froude a first class setting down for his opposition to Cardinal Pole, and pointing out that "Froude does not know the epoch or the men with whom he is dealing," Mr. Smith leaves this very important phrase for the consideration of his readers. "We should never have heard of the Protestantism of Henry VIII, if the Pope had consented to his marriage with Anne Boleyn." * * * * "There have been more sanguinary tyrants than Henry VIII.; there has never been one more brutal." Exactly! Had the Pope consented to violate the law which Christ left to St. Peter and his successors, in order to please the whim and gratify the passions of the royal monster, we never would have heard of the Protestantism that has been transmitted, in England, from that period to our own.

If Professor Smith were to try for ten years he could not write a more powerful defense of Rome and of the Pope, particularly in connection with the advent of Protestantism into England. The Pope could, by assisting in the performance of a crime, have retained a whole important country under the See of Rome; but when the balance held an Empire and the other the assertion of a religious truth—a principle—the infallible representative of Christ did not hesitate. Not one iota of the Church's dogma could be sacrificed, even for the sake of an earthly kingdom. In His own good time God will bring about the return of that kingdom to the fold, (and even in our century have giant strides been made in that direction), but nothing could repair the chaos that would follow the opposite course if a Pope of Rome could possibly take it. We are thankful to the Professor for the powerful argument he has, all unwittingly, advanced in favor of Papal infallibility, and in condemnation of the source of Protestantism in England.

But our object is to cull a few phrases to use as quotations hereafter—when

occasion requires, and not to comment, for actually comment is superfluous. There is, perhaps, no more beautiful figure in the history of England than that of Sir Thomas More. Few grand characters have been more abused, misrepresented and condemned than this great and holy man. Listen to Goldwin Smith in his criticism of Froude's diatribes against Sir Thomas More: "Yet more repulsive than the whitewashing of the tyrant is the systematic blackening, sometimes by adroit inuendo, of the characters of his victims. It is especially repulsive in the case of Sir Thomas More. To disarm our natural indignation at the foulest of judicial murders, More is painted as the most cruel of persecutors. More, like all men of his time, and most notably King Henry VIII., the author of the Six Bloody Articles, believed heresy to be a crime, wrote against it, tried to repress it, and, while he was chancellor, allowed the law to take its course. To some minor acts of personal severity he pleaded guilty. But to say that when he came into office 'the Smithfield fires recommenced,' is most unfair. Erasmus, who watched these events, asserted, in proof of More's humanity, that during his chancellorship not a single heretic had suffered death."

Here is another peculiar paragraph:—"Froude tries to create the impression that Fisher and More had done or said something disloyal, which rendered their execution inevitable, though very sad. They had neither done nor said anything whatsoever, but had simply declined to declare their assent to the Acts of Succession and Supremacy, the latter of which acknowledged an earthly sovereign as head of the Church, in the teeth of principles which Henry himself championed some years before. The suggestion that their convictions would have led them to join a Papal invasion of England is preposterous. This spectre of an armed Europe preparing to invade England and crush the Reformation is constantly conjured up by Froude to justify these murders. It is a creature of his fancy."

It is refreshing to find two such opponents—in the arena of history—cutting and lashing the Catholic Church, and when one has fallen, the other, to leave a lasting memorial of his opponent's inferiority to him, literally takes up the Catholic side of most important questions. Smith says again of Froude: "There is a disagreeable artfulness in the whole of the attack on the character of More." One of Froude's most brutal remarks was on the deaths of the Protestant Archbishop Allen and his chaplains in Ireland. Thus criticises Mr. Smith: "Fisher and More had no more to do with the murder of Archbishop Allen and his chaplains than with the murder of Abel, and were no more likely to approve one than the other. Their names are introduced merely for the purpose of creating a prejudice against them as victims of Henry VIII. This is not the duty of an historian."

How the late lamented Father Tom Burke would have enjoyed this article of the erratic professor. Who would imagine Goldwin Smith penning the following three paragraphs?

"All this judicial murdering of good men, and all the butchery and cruelty of which the reign was full, were necessary, according to Froude, for what? To purify and restore in its primitive and genuine form the religion of Jesus. What would Jesus have said to the execution of Fisher and More?"

"In spite of their literary merits, which are unquestionably great, the volumes comprising the reign of Henry VIII. must, as history, be laid aside.

This subject, so full of tragic and criminal interest, still waits for an historian."

"In the reign of Mary we have again to be somewhat on our guard against Froude's hatred of Cardinal Pole, whom he pursues with an implacable animosity which would hardly have been justified if the Cardinal had cheated him at cards. * * * * In the one case in which Froude can show Cardinal Pole intervening, it happens to be on the side of mercy."

We have not space to quote the Professor's defense of Mary, Queen of Scots, against the miserable and unmanly attacks of Froude. We have, however, given enough to show how fair Goldwin Smith can be, when he finds it convenient. Some other time we shall have occasion to contrast these remarks and criticisms with other peculiarly contradictory assertions and deductions of the same great English master upon those same questions. However, we must quote the closing paragraph of that exceptional article. "The gifts of pictorial and narrative power, of skill in painting character, of clear, of eloquent and graceful language, Froude had to a degree which places him in the first rank of literary artists. That which he had not in so abundant a measure was the gift of truth." Strange to say that times numberless have the same judgments been passed upon Goldwin Smith. The fact is, that in picturing Froude, he pictures Smith; they both rowed in the same boat, but fell out over the mastery of the vessel.

THE PREMIER'S FUNERAL.

Perhaps in the annals of this century no such combination of exceptional circumstances took place to stamp with the seal of impressiveness the obsequies of any man, as what the whole Empire has just witnessed in the death, bringing home and funeral of the late Sir John Thompson. Here have we a striking illustration of those immortal lines, so oft quoted, and yet so constantly new, from Gray's undying "Elegy":

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

Apart, however, from the last line, the departed Premier's life cannot be said to have awakened such thoughts; for truly the "boast of heraldry" he knew not; all honors were showered upon him, for merit, not transmitted by the accident of lineage; "the pomp of power" was not his, nor was it congenial to him; and "all that wealth e'er gave" was a life of toil without the reward of even a competency adequate to the position he occupied. To him may more truly apply that other verse from the same poem:

"The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read his history in a nation's eyes."

Elsewhere we give an account of the funeral at Halifax. We would advise our young readers to preserve it, for in years to come, when Canada has grown to be the buckle in the belt of the Empire that engirdles the world, when her population will have doubled, and her great men will be as numerous as those of other lands, the sons of another generation will tell their children of the extraordinary event that marked the closing of the brightest, if shortest, public career that, since confederation, added a chapter to our history. We now take our last farewell of Sir John Thompson; in future we can only speak of him as one of Canada's historic giants, one of her golden landmarks. But as Catholics we must remember that the duty of prayer for his soul is always present.

POEMS AND LYRICS.

In this issue we publish the poem, "The Deathless Dead," written by Dr. J. K. Foran, on the occasion of the State funeral of the late Premier. This will be the last in the section of "Memorial Poems," in the volume which is now in press. This collection will cover about 350 pages and will contain about 140 poems. The edition will be splendidly bound, and no pains are being spared by the publishers, Messrs. D. & J. Sadler & Co., to make it one of the most attractive Canadian books of 1895. It will contain patriotic, descriptive, historical, memorial, religious, miscellaneous and humorous poems. A very large sale is expected, as the volume will suit both as an Easter gift and a school prize, as well as a valuable addition to any library.

THAT was a very sad and instructive scene which took place in Paris, on last Saturday, when Captain Alfred Dreyfus, in accordance with a sentence of the court martial, was publicly degraded. We all know that famous expression, "it is splendid, but not war;" in this case we could well reverse the expression, "it is military, but not humane." There is certainly a doubt as to Dreyfus' guilt; but in military tribunals there is no "benefit of the doubt." There is something cold and cruel in the programme of degradation. Behind him the memories of a promising career, around him the heartless vindictiveness of a mob that is proverbial for its fickleness—idolizing a man one day and tearing him to pieces the next,—before him a life-imprisonment in some isolated fortress. While we thoroughly understand that a nation must be protected against treason, yet justice might be satisfied in a more humane procedure. Will the example strike terror into others who might become traitors? If that is the reason for heaping so much ignominy upon one poor victim, then God help the nation whose soldiers or citizens are faithful through fear and not through love.

THE SEE OF ST. BONIFACE.

FATHER LANGEVIN, O.M.I., SAID TO HAVE BEEN APPOINTED AS SUCCESSOR TO THE LATE ARCHBISHOP TACHE.

The following despatch, dated New Year's Day, from Rome, has gone the rounds of the press:

"The Pope has appointed Father Langevin, of the Congregation of St. Mary Immaculate, to the Bishopric of St. Boniface, Manitoba, in succession to the late Archbishop Tache, who died during the summer."

Should this be true, we can heartily congratulate Father Langevin, the splendid Community of which he is a member, the diocese over which he is called upon to preside, and the Catholic Church in general throughout Canada.

Rev. Father Langevin is the son of Philippe Langevin, notary, and was born at St. Isidore, Laprairie county, nearly thirty-nine years ago. Father Langevin studied at the Montreal College, where he passed with high honors. He was a classmate of Father Therrien, of Mount St. Louis, and a warm friendship sprung up between them in their student days, which has continued up to the present. After completing his studies he remained at the Montreal College for two years, afterwards studying theology at the Grand Seminary. He next entered the novitiate of the Oblat Fathers at Lachine, where he made his vows. After a trip to France, he returned to Montreal and performed the duties of the priesthood at St. Peter's Church, Montreal, when he was transferred to Ottawa as Superior of the Seminary. He was then sent to Manitoba as Superior of the missions in the North-West, in which capacity he has visited all parts of the country, and made friends wherever he went, both among Catholics and Protestants. Father Langevin is a Doctor of Theology, is of a most charitable disposition and a fine speaker.