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Northwest Review.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1898.

**REPORT OF THE LAST MEETING
OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL.**

To-day being the Feast of All Saints, a holyday of obligation in which no work can be done on a Catholic paper, and our limited space being already filled, we are forced to defer till next week a spicy report of the last stormy meeting of the University Council. Meanwhile, we would respectfully direct the "Morning Telegram's" attention to the faultiness of its report in one particular. Father Drummond is therein misrepresented as reminding the Council "that it was well to merge as their [St. Boniface] college had done their individual interests in the interests of the whole." Now Father Drummond, as may be seen from the Free Press report, which reproduces his short speech almost verbatim, said no such thing. What he did say was this: "When the St. Boniface College representatives had taken a position at variance with the rest of the University, it had been urged upon them by ONE HIGH IN AUTHORITY IN ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE that they should merge their own special interests in the wider interests of the University." The members of the Council, knowing what Father Drummond alluded to, were fully aware that he was merely reminding St. John's College that "its own chickens were now coming home to roost."

MEADOWHURST CHILDREN.

When we received from the "Editor Publishing Company" of Cincinnati a dainty volume entitled "Meadowhurst Children and other tales" by Eleanor Le Sueur Mac Naughton, the middle name of the writer, being that of a singularly gifted family, prepared us for something out of the ordinary. The sister of Mr. W. D. LeSueur, Mrs. Dr. Yeomans and Mrs. A. MacGillis could not well be commonplace. We had already seen a couple of her inimitable sketches in the Home Journal, of New York; we had admired her power of making the unknown familiar and alive; but we had not yet

seen her clothing in childlike language the sweet fancies of childhood.

Here are some of them. One of the Meadowhurst children is telling how they played "The Babes in the Wood." It appears it was very hard to secure a boy willing to act the baby. "Little boys don't like to act anyway, and they hate being babes; so at last we had to get Larry Milligan, the milk-woman's little boy, and he isn't the least bit pretty. He has red hair and grey eyes and freckles, but he was very quick at acting, and did just what we told him, and in one way he made a very good babe, because his face was 'all besmeared and dyed', though not with blackberries, but really molasses did just as well."

This last remark is thoroughly childlike. So is the following unmethodical way of relating an untoward incident. Hugh is an interesting lame boy whom even prim Miss Primmer took a fancy to. "One day when he seemed tired she asked Mrs. Milligan to let him come and lie down and she would bring him home herself after dinner. We were really frightened when we heard of it, for one day she boxed poor Larry's ears just because he climbed upon her fence to see if his ball was in her garden; at least he only meant to look, and it was not his fault that he fell over on her strawberry bed or that Tansy, her big Tom-cat was sleeping there. I am sure it was the terrible meow-ow that Tansy gave that brought Miss Primmer flying out of the house."

Peggy and the little spokeswoman, who tells about the Meadowhurst children's plays, picnics, surprises and wedding, do not like the month of November, because it has no flowers, fruits, nuts or even dry leaves, and the snow has not yet settled down for good. "Fred says that November can't help being that kind of a month and that the right way would be for people to plan pleasant things for it instead of having them all in the other months that don't need them. He says that he means to have all his children's birthdays in November so that at least there will be plenty of parties and presents."

Many other delicious extracts tempt us, but we think these will suffice to show that Mrs. MacNaughton gives us the live thoughts of real children sparkling with delicate unconscious humor. Of all her children, whose little personalities leave a very distinct impression, we like Larkie Adams and Petit Jean best. Petit Jean alone with God and petite Marie in the hollow of the big rock, spreading out his arms against the rising tide is really an awesome, thrilling scene.

This typical child's book certainly deserves many editions, and we trust that the proof-reading will be better done in the next, especially as regards the French words, poor "grandmère" being always afflicted with an "accent aigu."

Rev. Father Gravel, chaplain of the Grey Nuns, returned from Nicolet, Que., last Friday. Rev. Father Kruse, O.M.I., came by the same train and will act as assistant to Rev. Father Page, O.M.I., at Esterhaz, Assa.

SISTER MARY'S REQUIEM.

Sermon by Father Drummond.

Last Thursday, at 10 A. M. the Winnipeg friends of the late Sister Mary Xavier had a solemn Requiem Mass offered up for the repose of her soul. Rev. Father McCarthy, O. M. I., was the celebrant, Rev. Father O'Dwyer, O. M. I., the deacon and Rev. Father Kullavy, O. M. I., the subdeacon. At the offertory Miss Barrett sang, better than she was ever heard to sing, "Some Sweet Day." Mr. Marston's singing was of great assistance for the Dies Irae and Mr. Bétournay accompanied with his usual skill the Libera.

Considering that it was a week day the attendance was very large and quite half of the people in the Church were Protestants who had come to pay their tribute of loving sorrow to the dear departed friend. Nine Grey Nuns and two or three "Black" Nons (among whom was Sister Martin of the Ascension) occupied the front seats.

From Proverbs, 31, 30: "Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain; the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised," Rev. Father Drummond, S. J., preached in part as follows:—

My dear Brethren, We are gathered here for a purpose which is at once mournful and consoling: mournful, because the very fact of our presence here reminds us that she whom we esteemed and loved is gone before and that in this world we shall never again see her bright and kindly smile; and yet consoling, because next to the visible presence of dear friends is the comfort we derive from talking about them.

In this familiar talk I have chosen the text, "Favor is deceitful", etc. In fact the favors of this world did not seem at first to be bestowed on Sister Mary Xavier.

Born at St. John's, Newfoundland, whence her parents (Mr. and Mrs. Dunn) removed with their infant daughter Margaret to Aylmer, near Ottawa, she was handicapped for the struggle of life, having come into the world without that completeness of of bodily frame which is the common heritage of most of us. She had, as you remember, no left forearm.

"Beauty is vain." There is question here, of course of the beauty of the body, which, though a gift of God, is one of the most dangerous. Vanity is its too frequent consequence, nor can there be a sadder sight than that of waning comeliness striving to repair the irreparable inroads of age. Margaret Dunn had no such obstacle to contend with; but her physical limitations seemed to the Superiors of the Order she wished to enter an insurmountable impediment. So, in 1853, she bid adieu to home and friends and undertook a journey to the Red River which, in those days, presupposed almost heroic fortitude in a girl of sixteen. She came here to devote herself to teaching the Indians and halfbreeds. Soon her remarkable gifts of mind and heart won the favor of the local Superior of the Grey Nuns, who rightly judged that a physical infirmity such as hers was more than counterbalanced by her virtue and talent, and she was received into the novitiate of the Grey Nuns

at St. Boniface. It was soon seen that even with her crippled arm she could knit and sew as well as any seamstress.

"The woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." The world of men and women is split up into two categories: those who make themselves the centre of the universe, self-centred people; and those who accept God as the centre of all things. Sister Mary was one of these latter. She had that fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom. For forty-five years His will was the guiding-star of her religious life. Thirty-six years were spent in teaching and in directing the boarding convent of St. Boniface. Many of the ladies present here to-day will bear me out when I say that she made lifelong friends of her pupils. Firm, strict, nay almost sternly severe, and at times momentarily yielding to the warmth of her Irish character, she was ever ready to make up for these transient outbursts by a renewal of kindness and tenderness.

Curiously enough, she was past fifty years of age before she found, in hospital work, a sphere adapted to the complete expansion of her extraordinary gifts. Chief among these were her gifts of sympathy and understanding. You know how that gift of sympathy, the being all things to all, was the special prerogative of St. Paul. Well, Sister Mary possessed it in a high degree, and it was based on her wonderful perspicacity in reading the characters of people. How came it that this woman, who, having become a nun at the age of sixteen, never witnessed the vanities of the world, yet understood and penetrated them as if she had been steeped in them all her life? Apart from the usual enlightenment which is the ordinary result of leading a higher life, I should say that Sister Mary had the intuitions of genius.

One of the signs of genius is the power of drawing conclusions from a very few facts or ideas. While the ordinarily clever person plods wearily through a multitude of details before daring to make an inference, the genius sees the conclusion almost at a glance. So was it with our dear departed Sister. A word, a look, a gesture often sufficed to give her the keynote of a character. Over and over again, before she could possibly know anything of a patient's inmost feelings, she would casually give an estimate of his character which I afterwards found, when the patient unbosomed his inner soul to me, marvellously correct. She had the wide, strong grasp of the masculine mind without any the slightest tinge of unwomanliness. It was a part of her general trustworthiness that she was thoroughly discreet, thus giving the lie to that mistaken notion that women have no discretion, whereas the fact is that they are often much more discreet than the stronger sex.

Her piety was, not of the demonstrative, but of the solid sort. I have seen her intelligent face racked with visible pain when she saw a soul drifting into the jaws of death without that sorrow for sin which alone can open the gates of heaven.

In the care of the sick and suffering she was indefatigable. She was so quick in seeing, so

wise in devising what was needed that everybody had recourse to her and thus she was habitually overworked. Doubtless her comparatively early death, in spite of her strong constitution, at the age of sixty-one, is due to her excessive labors.

The week before she died she had twice staid up all night and had neglected to make up, as her rule allowed, for this privation of rest by extra sleep. During that last week of her life she said she thought she would die soon. On the Sunday afternoon, the eve of her death, she was kept busy answering about fifty calls to the parlor: for in Calgary, as well as in Edmonton, and in Manitoba she always had a host of clients who appealed to her for sympathy and advice as their best counsellor and friend. That night she complained of feeling unwell. The next morning, when one of the Sisters found her trying to sleep, she said: "I feel as if I was about to die; but I am afraid I shall not have that chance."

This was her last conscious utterance, and how well it sets forth the mainspring of her life! She has worn herself out, not with pleasure or self-seeking, but with unremitting labor for others; and now, when she realizes that this collapse of her strength may be the harbinger of her release, she thinks the glad news is too good to be true. When the Lord seems to say, "Lo! I come quickly," she can hardly believe that she is about to have that good fortune.

The doctors try in vain to rouse her from the fatal torpor that is upon her. But the venerable Father Fouquet, O. M. I., who anointed her, maintains that, though she could not speak, he could detect a look of consciousness in her face. And so Sister Mary Xavier went to God at midnight between the 17th and 18th of October, in the Calgary Hospital of which she was the Superior. Her Divine Spouse, to whom she had consecrated her noble life, will, we know, have communed with the creature of his hands in these last moments which seemed to her weeping Sisters to be shrouded in unconsciousness.

And now, Dear Brethren, let us dwell for a moment on the lessons of this edifying life. The first thing that strikes me is that Sister Mary's career is a crushing answer to those who say that none but married people can understand children. Were it not that this sort of thing is publicly proclaimed by men and women who are supposed to be in their right senses, I should deem it too ridiculous to mention, especially in the teeth of the glaring fact that most of our public school non-Catholic teachers are unmarried. But since such silly assertions are occasionally made, it is well to look back on the teaching record of one who was eminently successful in training girls of all classes and creeds and whose success began at the early age of sixteen and increased till the age of fifty-two, when she was called to other work. The fact is, matrimony is a sacrament the sanctity of which is nowhere so strictly safeguarded as in the Catholic Church; but it does not confer the ability to manage children. Who has not known parents