



CURRENT COMMENT

Extremely interesting and graphic are Father Halpin's letters to the "Home Journal and News" of Yonkers, N.Y., from Manila. In a recent issue we find these words: "No one can come to Manila — or better no Catholic can wend hither, without being strengthened in his faith. It is the same faith, the same yesterday and to-day and the same forever. It is the same Mass, the same sacrifice, the same adoration, the same God, the same Christ, the same worship, the same ritual and the same language."

Elsewhere he says: "No matter how often I entered any of the churches, and no matter at what hour, I found adores. The faith shone out. I had sometimes a Filipino boy, sometimes a Filipino man for a server. They served a little boisterously and vociferously, but they served well. At first it was a little distracting to see the brown legs flashing under the short cassock."

Of the more immediate accessories of the Holy Sacrifice he writes: "The altar linen is rich and immaculate. Everything that touches the most Holy Sacrifice is scrupulously white. . . . I never saw anywhere priests more devout in their movements at the altar and more religiously faithful in their observance of the rubrics. This is very flattering to the Spaniard, and I am very glad to put it on record for them, for I know, besides, that they are hungry, these poor Friars, for crumbs of comfort. Yes, these priests of the Islands, whom I have had occasion to meet so frequently, show exteriorly traces of seminary training which speak splendidly for the devotion of Spanish bishops and friars."

Compare this first-hand knowledge with the pronouncement of the Right Rev. Charles Henry Brent on his departure for the Philippines, where he is to be Episcopal Bishop: "I am going to the Philippines, not as the enemy of the Roman Catholic Church, but as the enemy of her enemies,—lust, extortion, dishonor, and oppression. For centuries she has fought these foes, and, judging from the reports of the Philippine Commission, she has failed miserably. It may have been more the fault of the Spanish Government, the government of shame and corruption, than the fault of the Church, but it was the duty of the Church to leaven the government rather than be corrupted by it." With the recent disclosures of General Miles fresh in our memory, we cannot help smiling at the good Bishop's calling the Spanish rule a "government of shame and corruption." Its fruits, by which it should be judged, are certainly more wholesome and less bitter than those of the American rule.

"As to the dismal failure of the Catholic Church, of which Mr. Brent does not speak on his own authority, but on that of the Philippine Commission," Dr. E. L. Scharf, zealous white-washer though he be of the Washington officials, calmly reports, "it may be pointed out that the Episcopalians, with other Protestant sects, had charge of the elevation of the negro in the South for about the same period the Catholic Church had of the Filipinos. The contrast in the condition of the two races at the present time speaks for itself and needs no further comment."

Father Halpin, from what he has already seen, is convinced that

the United States "may Americanize the natives, but will never Protestantize them." He says: "It was a bad and an unwise and an unpolitical move on the part of the American government to lift in the very beginning the sectarian flag. There are Filipinos and Filipinos. There are some who hopelessly aim for independence. These will shout their hurrahs under any banner, whether Protestant or non-Protestant, because their only ambition is autonomy. These are very few. There are the others who prefer to 'gang' their own quiet 'gait,' provided they are sure at sunrise that their dole of daily bread will be granted at sunset. I am not in any fear of the Insurrectos. They are a very small number."

Father Halpin joins the general chorus of Catholics and non-Catholics in praise of the Manila Observatory which, founded by Father Faura, S.J., with the sole purpose of studying the laws that regulate typhoons, has become unrivalled as a practical and scientific authority. The warning it gives several days in advance prevents many disasters and is considered by all navigators as the best guarantee of their safety. Father Halpin has already witnessed and felt an earthquake, which was a slight one. After it was over "all Manila said: The observatory will tell us all about it this evening or to-morrow morning."

We trust Father Halpin will soon give us his opinion of the Friar question. The journals which aim at being on good terms with the government are trying to pooh-pooh what they call the exaggerated statements of the staunchest Catholic papers. A popular and optimistic chaplain of the U. S. army, Father Vattman, has gone to Rome to help whitewash the government. Vox Urbis, the clever Rome correspondent of the N. Y. Freeman's Journal, gives an amusing account of this good priest's audience with the Holy Father. He was introduced, with a group of Americans, not at all in a private audience, "to His Holiness by Mgr. Kennedy, who said that Father Vattman had just come from the Philippines. Pope Leo asked after the health of Governor Taft; Father Vattman said the Governor was all right, and the Holy Father said that he sent him his greetings. The chaplain rose from his knees, made way for the next, and it was all over. But Father Vattman was very pleased, and at once telephoned for the correspondent of the Associated Press announcing that he was preparing for him an account of his audience with the Pope. About his interviews with Cardinal Rampolla Father Vattman was mysterious. He had presented his report on the Philippines to His Eminence, a wonderful man; he had told him that things were going on very nicely indeed in the Philippines, "which he had traversed from one end to another." Asked by me if he had any special authority to report on anything, he looked awfully solemn, but a little later declared that he had merely given the 'cardinals' the benefit of his experience. He must be a very kind-hearted man. Finally he assured me that he was sure that his 'work in Rome would redound to the advantage of Church and State.'"

While such puerile attempts are made to throw dust in the eyes of Papal Rome, the better class of Catholic journals are giving a very distressing picture of the treatment of the Friars in the Philippines. The San Francisco "Leader" lately published a terrible letter on the "Real Situation in the Philippines" and backed that letter up with a series of editorial climaxes such as Father Yorke alone can produce. It

is a trumpet call to Catholics. They must protest against the devilish skill with which the Hon. William H. Taft, Governor of the Philippines, is squeezing out the Friars. It is a question of the very existence of Catholicism in those islands. "It is," says the correspondent, writing from Manila, "a question of the poor people who are begging for their pastors to come back, begging for religious instruction, begging for Mass and the Sacraments; and alas! so far, begging in vain."

It is curious to note how history repeats itself in the matter of wholesale mandacity. Some fifty years ago the Rev. Charles Kingsley gave to the world a pseudo-historical novel, much admired by the 'muscular Christian school' of that time, which touches the high-water mark of ultra-Protestant fable with regard to the Spanish nation. "Westward-ho!" is the stirring title of that stirring book. Fascinating it can hardly be called, for the interest lags a good deal. The novel is surcharged with bits of erudition and personal comments of the author. It contains one or two redeeming passages, such as the wish that "the military brotherhood between Irish and English, which is the special glory of the present (Crimean) war, may be the germ of an industrial and political brotherhood," and the strong defence of the Bible view (as opposed to the baseless scientific theory) that the savage is a degenerate not a primitive being. But the sum-total of the work, its plain purpose from beginning to end is the vilification of Catholicism and especially of Spain, then in the end of the 16th century) the great Catholic nation. No tale is too absurd, no calumny too black when a Spaniard, an Irishman, or a Jesuit is introduced. For a well informed Catholic "Westward-ho!" is mainly disgusting. For Catholic youths it is positively dangerous. And yet we were informed by a staunch Catholic that he had lately found it for sale in a Catholic bookshop as a very good book for a school prize!

"Westward-ho!" is a fair reflex of Charles Kingsley himself, the man who posed as the apostle of sincerity, manliness and courage, and who, when pulverized by John Henry Newman's answer to his slanderous insinuations, had neither the sincerity nor the manliness to retract and went down to his grave a convicted but unrepentant liar. Just so this novel, upon which his fame chiefly rests, while professing to extol honesty and truth, is a skillful tissue of historical falsehoods. Of this we need adduce but one example. Kingsley everywhere contrasts England's humane treatment of the savage with Spain's cruelty to him. Yet the broad and unanswerable fact—which Kingsley must have been aware of, though he never mentions it—remains, that the English-speaking adventurers all over the world, until they were shamed into a change of conduct by the example of Catholic nations, exterminated the savages, while the Spanish colonists made them multiply and prosper.

The late C. Kegan Paul, in his delightful "Memories," furnishes us with a key to Kingsley's character. Kingsley's natural virtues, his activity, his devotion to his parishioners, had so much influence on Kegan Paul that they decided him when wavering, to take Orders. He speaks of him as a "coruscating person, in no sense a learned man, nor a sound scholar, nor a deep theologian, nor a well-read historian; he knew more of science than of all these put together, yet was not really scientific. But on almost all subjects conceivable he had read enough to talk brilliantly, without any inconvenient doubt that his

equipment was entirely sufficient." One of Kingsley's favorite expressions gives the key we mentioned above. He was once discussing with Kegan Paul and Percy Smith what the serpent of Genesis, iii, might mean. "Kingsley, who stammered dreadfully, tossed back his head, and said with a gasp: 'I've always thought that the serpent was a serpent-worshipping black tribe.' We came to know," adds Kegan Paul, "that when Kingsley said, 'I've ALWAYS thought,' it meant that the sometimes brilliant, always paradoxical, notion had just flashed into his head for the first time." This depicts to the life, Charles Kingsley, a vain-glorious humbug.

Last week's latest news points to a substantial advance in the Irish Land Bill. The Irish members have succeeded in convincing Mr. Wyndham that it would be best to concede a fair measure of freedom in the bargains between landlords and tenants. It is now believed that the success of the bill is assured. The conciliatory temper of the cabinet has produced a fresh burst of enthusiasm for the King, whose persistent pressure in favor of decent treatment for Ireland is too well authenticated to admit of doubt in the minds of the people.

The new French Canadian flag is being adopted wherever there are groups of French Canadians. This is as it should be. We were among the first to express our dislike for the French tricolor when used by Canadians. Of course French people from France are welcome to display it as their national emblem, as the reminder of many a great victory. But its adoption by Canadian Catholics has always seemed to us unreasonable. The immense majority of French Canadians are descended from generations to whom the tricolor was unknown. And since the latter became by law the natural standard of France in 1792, it has generally represented the repression, if not the persecution, of the Church by the State. From 1792 to 1815, when the tricolor was used, Catholics had not much to boast of in the way of liberty and had very much to suffer; the martyrs of the Revolution and the imprisonment of the Pope were the most salient religious aspects of that period. During the "hundred days" of Napoleon's last stand the tricolor returned with him, after having been momentarily supplanted by the white flag of royalty, which was again, on April 18, 1816, decreed to be the national standard. The revolution of 1830 restored the tricolor, which has since remained the flag of France. Thus, the tricolor has been in use 96 years, during most of which the Catholic Church has been either secretly or openly antagonized by the innumerable governments that have successively ruled France. There are only two periods when Catholics enjoyed comparatively liberty: the first part of Napoleon III.'s rule as President and Emperor, from 1848 to 1859, and the first years of the present, or third Republic, from 1870 to 1879; that is to say, out of nearly a century of tricolor rule, the Catholics of France can look back on twenty years of tolerably fair treatment. Surely, this is no sufficient reason for French Canadian Catholics to adopt as theirs the present flag of France. What they want is a flag that will remind them of their origin, history and of their religion, and this the newly adopted flag does admirably. The blue ground recalls the Canadian victory of Carillon, the broad white cross with the Sacred Heart in the centre recalls Catholic France, whose King, according to a pious belief, was advised by our Lord to place the Divine Heart upon his standards. The "Ole Regime" is also recalled by the fleur-

de-lis at the four corners, while the garland of maple leaves is distinctively Canadian.

The substitution of this beautiful flag for the tricolor is rapidly spreading. When once it becomes general, when the French consuls all over Canada will have to report to their government that the use of the tricolor by French Canadians is fast becoming obsolete, this rejection of their national standard cannot but produce a deep impression on the better class of citizens in the French Republic. France's daughter will be saying to her degenerate mother: "I once adopted your new flag when you seemed destined to remain the most Catholic of nations, but, since you have begun once more to persecute the Church, I have determined to reject your standard and to adopt one of my own."

From the Register's report of the Matriculation Examinations, published on June 25th, we gather that Lambert Breidenbach, of St. Boniface College, was among the first eight in the two Latin papers, one of the first two in the two Greek papers, and one of the first two in the two German papers, receiving for all these papers the exceptionally high grading of 80 per cent. or over. Out of 88 candidates who passed on the total, he was one of eight who got first class marks, 1B, on the total examination. Jas. Walsh, of the same college, got 1A (between 80 and 100 per cent.) for Latin Grammar and Prose, 1B (between 67 and 80 per cent.) for Virgil and Caesar, 1B for Greek Grammar and 1A for Xenophon. Joseph Chabot, also from St. Boniface College, got 1A for English Grammar and Composition and 1A for French Literature and 1A for French Composition and 1A for French authors. These three are the only students St. Boniface presented for Matriculation. Part II. This very gratifying result is especially remarkable in the case of Breidenbach who, taking German without any special tuition, as an extra subject not at all necessary for the general total, obtained as high a standing therein as he did in Greek.

Clerical News

The report comes by cable that the Holy Father said, on June 26, "The Latin world has been satisfied as regards the appointment of cardinals. Now the Anglo-Saxon people must be satisfied. Cardinal Vaughan must be replaced. Canada has been five years without a cardinal, and the United States is constantly clamoring for another." This may be only Roman gossip, but it is none the less interesting.

Last Tuesday, June 30, another Rome cablegram said the Pope was wonderfully active. People who have seen him lately declare that all traces of the Sovereign Pontiff's recent illness have disappeared. To some prelates of the Papal court who inquired if their tour in France might not be interrupted, Dr. Lapponi said: "Do not be anxious. You may stop away for several summers."

His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface is expected home on the 7th inst.

Rev. C. Chaput, S.J., left on the 25th ult., for Windsor, Ont., where he will preach the annual retreat to the Sisters of Jesus and Mary.

Rev. J. Blain, S.J., went to St. Anne last Tuesday to preside at the public school examinations.

Rev. Father Blondin, from the Province of Quebec, arrived here last Wednesday on a visit to friends.