

OUR CURBSTONE OBSERVER

On the Propagation of the Press.

URING the whole of my life, since I have been able to read, I have been a follower of Catholic journalism—in the sense that I have always had a Catholic newspaper in the house. My father was never without his Catholic paper, and as far back as I can remember the "True Witness" has been a weekly visitor in our home. Apart from what elementary instruction I received in religion at catechism and the more extended instruction obtained in college, I can say that all I know about the Church, its history, discipline, and the manner in which it has ever propagated the faith, I have gleaned from the reading of the Catholic newspapers that came to me, in one way or another. I can recall the pleasure with which I read the Holy Father's pronouncements upon the great work of the Apostolate of the press, and how, in my own mind, I compared the work being done by our missionaries in every land, with that done by the press as their auxiliary and support. And I cannot but say that I have frequently grieved, and felt astonished, when, in my rounds of observation, I met with those of our own faith who put no trust in our press, who prefer the uncertain and generally erring information that they obtain from the secular papers, who decline to help, or in any way, encourage our newspapers, and who are eternally crying out that they are unrepresented, unheard, unheeded.

A MISSIONARY ORGAN.—All these thoughts came back to me, when the other day I received a paper—a Catholic newspaper—from the very confines of civilization. The title of the paper is "The Yukon Catholic"—its motto "Pro Deo et Patria"—its purpose, "the interests of the Catholic Church in the North." It is printed at Dawson City, N.T., and published monthly. The director is Rev. Father E. M. Buno, O.M.I.—one of that splendid band of Oblate missionaries, who, in the footsteps of the Grondins, Taches and Lacombes, carried the rays of civilization and Christianity into the vast Northwest, beyond the Rockies, and up to the boreal regions of the Arctic. The editor is Mr. Geo. K. McCord. It is a sixteen page paper, full of splendidly selected and ably written articles on every Catholic subject of moment, and replete with the latest Catholic information from all over the world.

A CONTRAST.—But when I looked at the terms of subscription I was astonished. One year, \$5; six months, \$3; single copy, 50 cents. Just imagine that statement. Here we have a group of Catholics, away off in the mining districts of the frozen Yukon, who are so devoted to their faith, so sincere in their appreciation of all missionary work, so convinced of the importance of the Catholic press, that they support a paper that is not only in prosperity, but even in a very flourishing condition.

Financial Side of New York Hospitals

New York was never so prosperous as to-day. There has never been a time in the history of the municipality when its citizens have been more generous in private and public gifts, but according to those who should know, in their capacity as Trustees, the great hospitals are so poor that it may be necessary to curtail running expenses to such a degree that wards and laboratories must be closed. For the sake of current expenses in some cases it has been necessary to even take from the capital on which the interest was meant to pay for the needs of the institutions.

Dr. Lorenz has sung the praises of the American hospitals since his return to Europe. He has publicly stated at home that New York has the best hospital service in the world. He had no reason to say so if he did not believe it to be so. The officers of the Associated Hospitals of the city say they are glad on account of New York's reputation that he was not shown the budgets of the affiliated institutions.

They pay five dollars per year subscription, and buy copies at fifty cents each, and they accept advertising rates that are proportionate to the foregoing figures. What am I to conclude from this? Simply that the Catholics of the Yukon, many of whom must be miners and laborers, have been seized with the true spirit of faith and have learned the value and necessity of a press of their own. But what is not my wonder when I turn to our older civilization, our Eastern land of modern improvements, our more densely populated centres, and I find that we Catholics grumble to pay the one-fifth of that sum as subscription for a thoroughly Catholic organ? It is almost beyond credulity. If they need a Catholic paper so much on the Yukon, we need one a hundred times more on the St. Lawrence; if they, in their scattered settlements and camps, require and thirst for genuine Catholic information, we should have fifty times as great a desire and need for the most authentic and authoritative Church news; if they have their rights to contend for and their interests to assert, in a land where there is so little of political, municipal and social issues to be considered, we, in a great centre, where we have to constantly contend and struggle, so many important interests at stake, and so great a part to play in the affairs of the community, should be twenty times more solicitous and more desirous to support every power that yields an influence and that, in turn, sustains our cause. Yet, strange to say, the very contrary seems to be the order of things.

CONCLUSIONS.—I can come to but one of two conclusions, in presence of these facts; either that we are so bent upon certain pursuits in life that we fail to avail ourselves of all the advantages that would certainly flow to us from the proper support and encouragement of our press, or else we are in a state of dangerous indifference regarding our claims to recognition, our rights as citizens, and our privileges as members of a mixed community. Be the cause what it may, we certainly are far and away behind the Catholics of the Yukon, in all that concerns our support of the Catholic press. And it is just as well to frankly admit our lacking in that regard, for unless we acknowledge the same we are not at all likely to awaken to the necessity of changing our tactics and of becoming both more patriotic and more practically Catholic. It is to be hoped that when the "Yukon Catholic" shall have succeeded in establishing itself as a recognized power for good in the vast and new regions of the North, and the story will be told of all that it has done for the missionary and his Catholic flock, there will be some kind of awakening amongst our people of the East, and that shame, if not any higher motive, will induce them to look upon their Catholic organs as a paramount necessity and to treat and support and encourage them accordingly.

because they believe he would have had to modify his praise with the statement that the service must deteriorate, unless those who supply the hospitals with their needs should agree to do so for the sake of charity. Food and hospital supplies and at cost price would under the prevailing rates of interest on endowments and the occasional necessary encroachment on the capital make bills hard to honor.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the financial embarrassment of the hospitals is the fact that those who benefit most by them in a financial way do not contribute to their support. The insurance companies, which are saved vast sums, because the hospitals turn out living men, whose families would have realized on their policies if it had not been for the hospitals, have been slow to understand or unwilling to see their obligations to the institutions. The same is true of the Manhattan Railway Company, the Metropolitan Street Railway Company, the trunk lines emptying their thousands of passengers in the city, the steamship lines, and the express companies, with their unwritten warrant to drive through the city streets as they will without regard to life and limb, under the impression that they are protected by some law, which has not been

recognized in the courts when they have been sued.

The New York hospitals find that they are confronted with an alarming financial situation. They do not know where to look, unless the business sense of the big corporations and the charity of those who have shown that they are eager and anxious to give of their wealth come to their aid.

Indicative of the situation is an appeal sent out by George Macculloch Miller, President of the Saturday and Sunday Association, which has been making appeals to the congregations of the synagogues and churches of the city. In behalf of the forty institutions of the Associated Hospitals, Mr. Miller says:

The necessity for more generous support of our hospitals is becoming daily more apparent. The plain truth is, that all, without exception, are facing a financial crisis, aggravated not a little by the recent high price of coal. To-day not one is self-sustaining, and to avoid serious arrears, all are forced to curtail their free work. Surely this is not a desirable state of things, nor one to be expected in a community so alive to all good works, and, particularly in a period of almost unexampled prosperity. Prompt and generous contributions are, therefore, not only greatly needed, but earnestly solicited, and all gifts will be divided among the forty associated hospitals on a basis of free work. Kindly send check to our General Treasurer, Charles Lanier, 17 Nassau street.

Frederick F. Cook, General Agent of the Hospital Saturday and Sunday Association, when seen recently, described the situation as really desperate. He has been the General Agent of the Associated Hospitals for many years, and is positive that in a financial way the institutions are more pinched than they were twenty years, or even ten years ago, because they are vastly superior in doing what is now deemed necessary in the proper conduct of the hospitals. Speaking of the impoverishment of the institutions, Mr. Cook said:

"Corporate wealth has heretofore held itself amply defended by its impersonality and implied trusteeship against all appeals for charity, and this in the face of the fact that the surface railways, causing accidents to keep our ambulances steadily on the move, and the life insurance companies and other corporations, are benefited almost beyond computation, not only by the ambulance service, but by the general hospital service, saving and prolonging life.

"Not one dollar has in any corporate capacity come to any institution within my knowledge. Then there is another thing. While every private or partnership banking house gives to the General Hospital Fund from \$250 to \$1,000, not a single National bank gives more than \$100, and this, as a rule, is a personal gift of the President.

"With these facts in mind, at the last meeting of the association the following committee was appointed to solicit subscriptions from corporations: R. J. Cross, Charles Lanier, Jacob H. Schiff, James Speyer, and August Belmont. The committee sent out appeals to many corporations, the members personally signing as a guarantee of the worthiness of the appeal. Their appeal was sent some weeks ago, with the result that the President of one life insurance company answered, expressing a desire to take the matter of appropriation into serious consideration. The situation is pitiable, and unless substantial support comes to our hospitals there is sure to be a deterioration in their work, and I do not believe that this community is prepared to face so undesirable a necessity.

"Twenty years ago nearly every hospital in New York was in a better position to meet expenses than it is to-day. Many had large incomes from endowments and rents, while others received large sums from the City Treasury. Incomes from investments have decreased year by year because of the lessened interest, even of valuable securities, and the revenue from the city has been rigorously pruned. In addition to this, funds have necessarily been invaded for rebuilding and repairs which could not be avoided. The general support is not what it used to be, and the expenses as compared with twenty years ago have nearly doubled.

"When this association was organized, in 1879, three of its charter members waived their share of the collection. They were the New York, Roosevelt, and the Nursery and Child's Hospital. Their incomes then supplied all their wants. About ten years ago changed conditions compelled the Roosevelt Hospital to make application for its share, and four years ago the Nursery and Child's Hospital followed suit. The New York Hospital now feels it ne-

cessary to ask, through its President, Cornelius N. Bliss, for help from the association. This is done reluctantly, as the New York Hospital, always a rich institution, disliked to ask for aid to make both ends meet.

"There are several causes for the poverty of the supposedly rich hospitals, the primary one being the increased cost of living. This affects the hospital, of course, as if does the household. Twenty years ago there were no trained nurses. Today their cost ranks second in the expenses of a modern hospital. It costs a great deal to train a nurse and, with her learning acquired, she must be paid more for her skill. Then, too, the service is so much more diversified and exacting that two nurses are required where one was thought sufficient in the past.

"When there are so many men of wealth who are ready to give largely to educational institutions and libraries and the other helps to the community it is too bad that more attention is not given to the hospitals. It would be well if it were realized by our philanthropists that those who benefit most through the training of the nurses are the rich themselves. There seems to be among them an unfortunate notion that they have done their duty when they pay for their nursing bills.

"With the discovery of the microbe (or its invention) the bacillus and the deadly germs of many kinds, the X ray, and what not, bacteriologists and analysts have become necessary to the hospitals. Immense sterilizing machinery has had to be introduced, while surgeons with reputations to lose use only the best instruments, and exact the most perfect conditions for operations, so that cleanliness has become something like a passion as well as a virtue. All this costs far more than imagined. The expenses of the ambulance service are far above what they were, and there are the many additional expenses dictated by the necessities of enlightened practice.

"The hospitals are desperately poor. The men of wealth and the great corporations benefited do not feel under obligation. Of course, there are notable instances where men of large means have expended their millions, thereby intensifying the critical situation by adding others to the endowed institutions, calling for the support of the general public.

"The general collection will barely reach the \$80,000 of last year unless those who can will help. Some of the hospitals have been forced to close wards because there was not the money to support them. Others, to keep the free wards open, have had to increase the number of private rooms because they pay. The fact remains that there must be large and generous help at once or our hospitals, which Dr. Lorenz praised abroad and has set up as examples, must deteriorate."—New York Times.

Automobile Service In France.

On June 1 next train service by means of automobiles will be opened between Lyons and Paris. The first train, composed of three "automobile carriages," is expected to carry 120 passengers the distance between the two cities in three hours at a speed of 100 kilometers an hour.

The enterprise has been undertaken by Gardner & Serpollet, who have already won long-distance automobile races in France, and who are now manufacturing the special automobiles and rolling stock for the project. The new carriage is 17 meters long, of which 2.6 meters are occupied by the traction apparatus, while it is estimated that the remainder will comfortably accommodate forty passengers and the 1,200 kilograms of baggage allowed them, besides a lavatory and a buffet for refreshments.

The advantages claimed by the makers of the carriage are that by the substitution of the automobile for the locomotive a weight of 110 tons is at once done away with, which, should the experiment succeed, will permit the roads to be built much lighter than they now are, with a corresponding decrease in the cost of construction and the certainty of greater endurance. The cost of the locomotive is also done away with, the expense of an "automobile carriage" being a little less than that of a vestibule car. Then the new carriages will abolish the smoke, steam, noise, vibration, and the jolts necessary to the stopping or the starting of a train drawn by a locomotive. They will be shaped like the bow of a steamer before and behind, so as to overcome, as far as possible, the resistance of the air. As each carries its own apparatus, it may be operated in a train or independently.

Devotion of Nuns In France.

A French paper hit on the happy thought of asking its readers for personal recollections of beautiful and touching actions currently performed by Catholic Sisters. The recollections are printed in the paper day by day, to be afterward collected into a book, which will be presented to President Loubet.

In 1881, during the bombardment of Alexandria, the Arabs set fire to the houses of European residents in various parts of the city. Coming to the French Hospital they started by knocking on the doors with the butt end of their guns. Their avowed intention was to force an entrance, plunder the house and then destroy it. Suddenly the door opened wide, and before the astonished incendiaries stood a bevy of nuns, headed by the superioress.

She addressed herself to the madmen thus:

"What do you want, my children? This is God's house. Are you hungry? We have bread for you. Are you thirsty? Our jars are brimful with heaven's dew. Have you sick or wounded comrades in need of care? Our beds are ready to receive them."

All this was spoken in the purest idiom of the children of Ishmael. In the presence of the courage and nobility of soul of St. Vincent's daughters the wolves became meek as lambs. With one common accord they changed their minds, saluted the white cornets with due respect and walked off, shouting "Allah Kerim! God is great!" Sister Permond, then 75 years of age, had saved the home of charity. In August, 1887, she received from the hands of Count D'Aubigny, French Consul at Cairo, the cross of the Legion of Honor.

Another: While the Paris Charity Bazar was blazing some five years ago a young Sister stood erect and calm near the chair whereon stepped one after another of the persons who escaped from the doomed building through an opening giving access to the Palace Hotel. She steadied the chair with one hand and with the other assisted every one to escape from the flames. When none were left to save she took her turn, got out half dead, frightfully burned and disfigured for life. Later on she was asked:

"What did you think of at that time? Did you think of God and of heaven where you were on the point of entering a martyr's charity?"

"Not at all," said she. "I thought only how it burns and how I suffer. But a Sister of Charity, you know, must stay at her post and save all the others before she may think of herself."

"That was," says the chronicler, "perhaps more the word of a soldier than that of a Sister; but it makes no difference, for the army of Sisters will bear comparison with any army. It is a supernatural army, commanded by Christ."

And still another: A young lady of a well-to-do family was stricken with a cancer of the face. Her parents secured a Sister to help them in caring for the poor unfortunate girl. It would be impossible to give an idea of the solicitude with which the devoted religious nursed her patient; but in spite of all the care the malady kept growing, and it soon spread over the whole face. After months of suffering the agony of death mercifully set in—a terrible agony, if ever there was one. The entire family was present, bending over the bed of the dying martyr. She was fully conscious and felt death coming slowly but surely. A crisis more violent than any preceding one was followed by a few moments of relative calm—the calm that usually heralds death. Slowly she raised her sunken, glassy eyes to the assistants, her lips quivered an instant, and then with a supreme effort she asked to be kissed once more before leaving this earth. Her relatives looked at one another in bewilderment; none dare approach, not one had the courage to grant the dying request. Then the Sister unaffectedly bent over and devoutly pressed her lips on the censored, foul-smelling face. She, a stranger, gave the longed-for parting kiss. The sufferer breathed her last a few minutes later, her disfigured features transformed by the light of a heavenly joy.

And still another: In the hospital of a city in the South of France Sister Martha nursed a depraved woman who had been operated on for a cancerous tumor. The wound needed frequent dressing, and that operation was naturally very painful. The good Sister performed her task with that dexterity and delicacy of touch which with these holy women seems to be a special gift of God. Still her patient was never satisfied.

she grumbled and scolded. One day a fanciful thought got into her wicked head, and she at once expressed it to her nurse.

"You do not understand anything about dressing wounds," said she. "I would feel a great deal better if a dog licked the afflicted spot." At once the poor Sister, who had no dog, passed her tongue several times across the hideous purulent wound. That was too much for the patient. She burst into tears and begged forgiveness for all her past brutality. From that day on she never complained any more.

The poor woman died a few days later, with good Sister Martha near her, for she would have no other.

The Free School Question.

(By a Regular Contributor.)

Still the constant hammering upon the anvil goes on; the other day it was stated, in one of our leading dailies, that friends of education should take advantage of the coming session of the Quebec Legislature to have a measure introduced "to remove the petty toll-gate from the entrance to our schools." And the state of our educational system is compared to the toll system on our country roads. Any one who will take the trouble to read our columns for several years back, cannot fail to come to the conclusion that we have been the constant advocate of educational advancement, and we are not, in any way opposed to the amelioration of every condition that exists to-day—as long as it can be shown that amelioration is needed. But we are strongly of the opinion that this continued decaying of our educational system is not only unjustifiable, but even highly injurious. What is the stranger to think of our province, and its educational institutions and advantages, when our own country's organs are perpetually holding them up to the censure and ridicule of the world? Especially, may we ask this question, in face of the fact that no other section of this continent, proportionately to population, has anything equal to our splendid galaxy of institutions, and no section of this Dominion has ever produced, in educated men, more evidences of advancement and efficiency, than has the Province of Quebec.

We admit that all these protestations have reference especially to Protestant schools; but our province being Catholic, a vast majority, it is naturally supposed that the Catholic system is the one that comes in for all the censure. When no distinction is made we have to submit to an undeserved imputation, simply because some of our fellow-citizens are dissatisfied with the condition of affairs amongst the non-Catholic element, as far as education is concerned. We repeat, that which we stated some time ago, that we do not wish to interfere in what concerns others; but we would have it understood that no system of free education could be more free than that which obtains amongst our people. If a child's parents have not the means to pay for his tuition, he has but to go to any of our schools or academies, and he, like so many hundreds of others, will be received with open arms and will be educated, free of charge, just as are those who have the means to pay. Go to any of the schools that are taught by the Christian Brothers, for example, and you will be astonished at the number of pupils whose names are on the free list. We do not purpose entering into a controversy on the subject, but we emphatically wish to state that our system, as far as our schools are concerned, knows no barrier and no toll-gate. Others may not have the same to say of their schools; but that is no fault of ours. All we desire is to place on record the fact that we enjoy the advantages of a splendid system, and if there be any defects they are such as can be remedied by merely calling attention to them, and without the necessity of any intervention on the part of the Legislature.

Death of Father Lambert, C.S.S.R.

The death of the Rev. Father Lambert, C.S.S.R., at the age of 82 years, is announced. Deceased was a native of Wexford, and was ordained at Maynooth in 1848. After serving on the secular mission in Wexford he joined the Redemptorist Order in 1875, and has been many years in Limerick, where his zeal and piety were most edifying. In Wexford, his native county, he deceased worked on the mission for twenty-eight years. He was much loved by the priests and people.

giving us a facili- almost mechanic- no one cares to do he sees no results, inspiration of our ur hope of achieving l we become active ough success. This ap- spirital and natural it is the destruction uls. In spirital work everything seems to we are discouraged by ure, may really be the g work. And the day g goes well and we p up our results and ve saved, is a fatal rk. For, though in e we can calculate our t for souls has no sta- terial is different, t measure or calculate Thus some of the ons of spirital works y anonymous or ap- cessful workers. n of the use of per- in work is a difficult ral feeling of distrust fual is often exag- t the same time it is element of truth. On those who are gifted ver of personal influ- nsatisfy this gift by od's work. St. Paul, a marvellous power influence, was delibe- y Our Lord that he or the persuasion of other hand, when pe- used merely to sub- and when advantage ir weakness or suscep- uence, to coerce them what they would not e done, it becomes an r and can lead to n. In dealing with souls, something that is very hich in its nature is , by the force of our ersuade any one a- , or if we use argu- in themselves, but sider good enough for ned individual we may h, then we are acting dishonestly; and the e thus subjugated will s soon as our influ- ed. things are to be spiri- , and spirital work ally done. If we set purely natural way- nral powers simply be- us pleasure to exercise ur time and money be- the work; visiting the ame reason that we go , because we like it— achieve any result that spirital value. The work for souls is to od. Our successes are- ves, but are gifts that o Him. The pleasure work may help us to ut it is a means only, er be an end. The aid of God, and must al- in view. n happens that the not done by the met For while a gifted trust to her natural experienced worker may facility of long prac- er and who nervous, d worker will have re- ay; and, distrust- end only on the por- from prayer. There- think that because turally gifted she can Those of little pow- ater work than those r, because they will- help in those spirital which alone spirital e attained. The er- work is known only to the Last Day, when the ade known, it may e least achievements will be the efforts of "motifed, rkers."

ON SHIPS.

of oil fuel on board illustrated by a great a ship, the Prince ang in Copenhagen har- had returned from spark from a smith's o have fallen on the moment the ship was imes. In the hold were ases of oil, and to save gation the dock-doors and the water rushing burning oil over most With hard work, fire was subdued, not destruction had been such a conflagration on ocean is can be im- water must ne- ave destroyed every

A poor little ed from the ruins of and marble call-