



## CURRENT COMMENT

Holy Father on the eve of his ninety-third birthday continues to be the wonder of Rome. A New York Times correspondent writes:

"On coming from the Pope the other day, Dr. Mazzoni was interrogated as to the state of his patient's health, and he replied: 'I do not say that he is the strongest man in the world, but there is certainly no one who is more free from ills. There is absolutely nothing the matter with him. I let him do exactly as he likes.'"

The correspondent adds that the faith that Leo XIII. is for long in this world amounts to a conviction in Rome, where preparations are already making for the Pontifical Jubilee, which will take place on March 6 next. That will not be Leo XIII.'s last Jubilee if he lives a year longer. On Dec. 13, 1903, he will round out the half century of his cardinalate. "Thus it is the firm belief of Catholics here," writes the correspondent we have quoted above, "that Leo XIII. will live to celebrate all possible jubilees as priest, bishop, cardinal and Pope—a circumstance without a parallel."

The Northwest Review, while regretting Mr. Deegan's withdrawal, gladly welcomes Mr. F. W. Russell to the presidential chair of the Catholic Club. Mr. Russell was practically the editor of this journal in the first years of its existence and has always continued to contribute to its success.

The welcome news was flashed across the ocean last Monday that the King's influence was bringing the settlement of the Irish land question within sight. The Prime Minister and a majority of the cabinet agree with His Majesty that a great effort should now be made to settle the whole question. And, what is more wonderful still, what is declared to be the most notable event that has occurred in Ireland for several generations, is the winning over by royal persuasion of extreme landowners, like Lord Londonderry, the Duke of Abercorn, Lord Barrymore and Lord Clonbrock, who, after first doing their utmost to make the Dublin Mansion House conference futile, now express approval of Lord Dunraven's report. They now see that the representatives of the tenants are more than willing to go half way in an endeavor permanently to pacify agrarian Ireland. The rental to be dealt with is just over £5,000,000 and the amount that the Imperial government would have to pay for the solution of the great problem would be about £600,000 a year. When we remember how successful the King was in ending the South African war before his coronation, we have every reason to hope that his marvellous tact will succeed in reconciling landlords and people—a consummation devoutly to be prayed for.

"Irish Mist and Sunshine—Balads and Lyrics," by Rev. James B. Dollard (Sliav-na-mon), comes to us from the Toronto publishing house of W. E. Blake. This tasty volume of poems has for its frontispiece an excellent portrait of the author, who looks very young to bear the burden of so much sadness. For his lyric muse sings mostly in a minor key. It is mainly, as Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., says in his sympathetic preface, a "tale of deep and haunting pathos." In his Ontario parish Father Dol-

lard thinks ever of his native land and lovingly dedicates this book of Irish verse to his mother. The Prelude, which gives its first title to the entire volume, also affords an insight into his manner and his favorite subjects.

### IRISH MIST AND SUNSHINE.

(A Prelude.)

Soft mist on Irish mountain,  
Bright sun on field and dell;  
Swift tides of joy and sorrow  
In Celtic hearts that swell;  
Green glen and haunted woodland,  
Loved homes by laughing streams;  
Firm faith and matchless manhood;  
Lo! these my varied themes.

Round tower and ivied abbey,  
Low whispering of the Past,  
Around life's early pathway  
Their dreamful shadows cast;  
Wild wind-blasts sighing voiceful  
Far o'er the moorland lone  
Brought throbbing fairy music  
To thrill with mystic tone.

Gray mist and flashing sunshine  
That fleck the gorse-land brown;  
High deed and cloudy legend  
Of Eire's old renown;  
The saints' and martyrs' yearnings,  
The patriot's rhapsodies;  
With tim'rous touch uncertain  
I strike the Harp to these.

Fair land of Mist and Sunshine,  
The distant exile thrills  
In dreams of home and kindred  
To see thy holy hills,  
Should song of mine show clearer  
Old scenes and skies of blue,  
Old hopes that crown life dearer,  
I hold my trust made true.

In copying this poem we have had to supply sixteen necessary marks of punctuation; the original has nothing in that line but four periods (one at the end of each stanza) and a colon-dash, which ought to be a semi-colon. We take this to be an indication of the author's general lack of polish and scholarly care. Not a line in his easy flowing verse naunts the memory; not a few lines are decidedly weak. Compare his "The Fallin' o' the Rain" with Moira O'Neill's "Corrymeela" in her Songs of the Glens of Antrim. The general idea is the same—loneliness for home. Father Dollard draws it out to 36 lines of rather monotonous iteration. Moira O'Neill compresses it into 24 lines, each one of which is a cameo patiently and deftly cut, presenting each time a fresh picture. The consequence is that "Corrymeela an' the blue sky and the low south wind an' the same soft rain" abide with us for ever. Compare again Father Dollard's "The youngsters are like city lads with boots upon their feet" (Knock-au Faerin, from the Irish), with Moira O'Neill's "There's not the smallest young gossoon but thravels in his shoes!" This is vivid, that is tame. What Sliav-na-mon needs to cultivate is the saving sense of humor and the "limae labor." That he has them both in reserve he shows in the well worked out "Cruise of the Blue Maureen," which has the lilt of a true ballad and a terseness that occasionally puts one in mind of the Ancient Mariner.

Most aptly does the Tablet editor, in an able review of what Catholics and Anglicans have won by the new Education Act, characterize the sort of religion dissenters were satisfied with in the old system which has now happily passed away. "Even if the broad simple principle of a fair day's wage for a fair day's work had been extended equally to both systems" (Board and Voluntary Schools) "from the first, Congregationalism would still have had the enormous

advantage, that it was free to teach in schools it had not paid for, and during school hours, its own peculiar religion—its compound of Bible stories and reminiscences of the ancient geography of Palestine."

The same writer, speaking of the old "pauper system," in which the salaries of Catholic teachers had to be eked out by bazaars, theatricals and conjuring tricks, says: "And the strange thing is that it was the Liberal party, men who have all the cant of education constantly on their lips, who delight in talking of the dignity of the teacher and the sacred nature of his calling, who were most anxious to perpetuate this pauper system. Fancy having to talk to a teacher about the dignity of his calling when you and he both knew that the payment of his salary was dependent upon the success of a jumble sale or a ping-pong match, and might be imperilled by the cold of a comic singer or even the whim of a performing flea!"

Our esteemed contemporary, "The Commercial," of this city, lately published an article on "Religious training," in which the conduct of the Jews in erecting a substantial building in the city to be used as a school for the moral and religious training of their young people is held up as a shining example "to those who are clamoring for religious instruction in the public schools." This plan, in which the hours of study have been arranged so as not to interfere with the public schools, is praised as "the most reasonable solution of the question."

It may present that appearance to the average Protestant mind, but it does not to the Catholic. When the Commercial, at the end of its article, comes down to detail, we find that two or three hours a week is all that is to be devoted to "moral and religious teaching." The rest of the time, say from 25 to 30 hours a week, is to be sacred to purely secular, public school instruction. Now this may suit the Jews, but it does not suit us. What we want is a Catholic atmosphere, rather than special hours for religious instruction. Give us truly Catholic masters and mistresses teaching Catholic children and we will answer for the moral and religious training of youth. Even if no special hour is set apart for catechism, even if the sacred name of God is seldom mentioned, the truths of the only true religion are always presupposed, they form a solid groundwork on which the whole educational edifice is built.

But if the child is to be exposed, during thirty hours a week, to the poisonous atmosphere of false views of Scripture, history and morals, two or three hours of the perfunctory administration of an antidote will hardly cure the little victim. We have in mind a case of this nature. A mother, fervently attached to the Catholic religion which she had embraced after her marriage, was obliged to send her sons to a public school not fifty miles from Winnipeg. There the elder boys who had made their first communion were so stuffed with Protestant lies by the teachers and so ridiculed by their Protestant companions that they openly abandoned the Catholic faith. The mother, hoping to save the youngest boy, removed him from that typical public school, and put him in a Catholic boarding school with a view to getting him prepared for his first communion. But it was too late; the 12-year-old lad was a confirmed Protestant, saturated with all the falsehood which he had imbibed.

## Clerical News

His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Mireault, went to Rat Portage Thursday of last week and returned on Saturday.

Rev. Father Lalonde, of St. Adolphe, said Mass last Friday in the chapel of St. Boniface college and breakfasted with the Fathers.

Rev. Father de Corby, O.M.I., of Fort Pelley, spent last week at the Archbishop's House and St. Mary's Presbytery, Winnipeg.

The Society of White Fathers, at work in the desert of Sahara, has published recently an account of the progress of its propaganda. The number of its African stations is 65, served by 261 missionaries.

Rev. Father Gendreau, O.M.I., of Rat Portage, came in on Tuesday and went to St. Pierre on Wednesday.

His Grace Archbishop Langevin, O.M.I., accompanied by Very Rev. A. Dugas, V.G., Rev. Fathers Cherrier, Cloutier, Proulx, S.J., Trudel, Beliveau and others, took the 8 a.m. train on Wednesday morning for Otterburne on their way to the celebration of Rev. Father Jolys' silver jubilee at St. Pierre.

Rev. Father Boutin, E.M.I., has accepted the mission of Whitewood and will make it a centre for the religious of his congregation expelled from France.

Rev. Father Lavigne, of Neche, came here last Monday and went to St. Pierre on Wednesday morning.

His Lordship the Right Rev. A. Pascal, O.M.I., arrived here last Saturday on his return from Montreal. While travelling the Bishop of Prince Albert had the misfortune to lose a pocket-book containing about \$500. The porter of the Pullman car, George Hutton, after a long search, found the pocket-book, and although he might have kept the money without fear of detection, he showed his honesty by handing the pocket-book to Bishop Pascal, who was so delighted with the recovery of his much needed funds that he immediately offered ten dollars as a reward to the honest porter, but the latter modestly refused to accept more than five dollars. His Lordship spent Sunday with His Grace the Archbishop and continued his homeward journey that evening.

Rev. Father Drummond will preach in St. Mary's church next Sunday evening, the 18th.

Rev. Fathers Guillet, O.M.I., and J. A. Magnan, O.M.I., went to St. Pierre last Wednesday.

His Grace the Archbishop was at St. Norbert last Monday with Rev. Father Boutin and the Rev. Father Inspector of the Brothers of Mary. On Tuesday the Archbishop visited St. Charles with Father Boutin.

## Persons and Facts

The term "Southwestern" in the following item is strikingly relative and sectional, since it refers to places in the northern part of Ransom county, which is in the south-east of North Dakota, but happens to be also southwest of Fargo.

"Rev. J. B. McDonald is publishing a little monthly paper called the Southwestern Catholic for the people of the missions of which he has charge at Sheldon, Lisbon, Verona, LaMoure, Enderlin and Leonard. The paper is serving a very useful purpose disseminating church news and keeping Father McDonald and his able assistant, Father Fogarty, in touch with their widely scattered flock."—The Sheldon Progress, Jan. 3, 1903.

Mr. Finley Peter Dunne, whose humorous name is "Mr. Dooley," got all his college training in St. Ignatius College, Chicago, and is one of the most prominent Catholics in that great city. He was lately married to Miss Margaret Abbott, who is said to be a "famous Chicago beauty." Before he achieved fame by his clever hits on current events, he was a reporter on various Chicago newspapers; but even before that, at the Jesuit college, he had given promise, in humorous sketches anent college happenings, of the line in which he is now so successful.

"The Freeman" of St. John, N. B., has passed into other hands and starts anew with the title, "The New Freeman," Vol. 1, No. 1, "a weekly paper devoted to Catholic interests," under the managership of Mr. J. O. McWilliams. "Le roi est mort; vive le roi!"

The following comment from the eastern shores of the Dominion shows that we struck a responsive chord:—

"Things must be pretty much the same in Winnipeg as in St. John. Our esteemed contemporary, the Northwest Review, commenting on the death of Mr. W. K. Reynolds, says he "was the victim of a surgical operation, which was, as usual, a great success, although incidentally it killed him."—The New Freeman, Jan. 3.

## THE POLICEMAN.

"The nicest man I ever saw,"  
Said little Nan to me,  
"Is the one who stands outside our school  
When we're let out at three.

"He's dressed just as the soldiers  
are;  
He wears gold buttons, too;  
And he stands up so proud and straight,  
The way the soldiers do.

"He always says, 'Come little kids,  
I'll take you across street,' and  
I guess 'cause I'm the littlest girl  
He always holds my hand.  
"And all the cars and horses stop—  
He's so big they don't care  
To say 'Get up' and drive 'em on  
Because he's standing there.

"He makes believe to chase the boys,  
And shakes his fist, and then  
He laughs and laughs, and they all come  
A-scrampering back again.

"Sometimes he pats me on the head  
And says, 'Ho! little girl,  
You going to wait till Christmas comes  
To cut me off that curl?'"

"And one time when it rained, the street  
Was muddy, and I cried;  
He picked me up and carried me  
Right to the other side.

"The nicest man I ever saw,"  
Said little Nan to me,  
"Is the one who stands outside our school  
When we're let out at three."