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WEDNESDAY, JULY 29.

CURRENT COMMENT.

**The Author of
A New Life.**

A new life of the
Venerable
foundress of the
Grey Nuns has lately been sent to us
for review. The author is the Rev.
David Ramsay, brother of the late
Judge T. K. Ramsay of Montreal.
Father Ramsay's conversion to the
Catholic church in the maturity of his
manhood was a notable event in the
Province of Quebec some thirty-five
years ago. He astonished all his high-
ly-connected relatives by withdrawing
from the world and going through,
when thirty-six years of age, the long
preparation for the priesthood. Soon
after his ordination he entered the
ranks of the secular clergy in England,
where he labored valiantly among the
poor of the North for more than twenty
years, becoming Rector of St. Bede's,
South Shields and Rural Dean of St.
Aidan. Wherever he went he endeared
himself to all by his charity to the
needy, whom he assisted from his own
ample inheritance, and by his devotion
to the cause of Catholic education.
Five or six years ago he returned to
Canada with shattered health but with
a mind enriched by the experience of a
zealous missionary and the varied cul-
ture of a refined and studious priest.
Such a man is admirably fitted to write
the life of a saintly gentlewoman such
as the Venerable Margaret Mary Du-
frost de Lajemmerais, widow of Mr.
Francis d'Youville, and foundress of
the Sisters of Charity, commonly called
Grey Nuns.

**Madame
d'Youville.**

We learn from this
interesting and well-
written biography
that Mary Margaret was the eldest of
the six children of Lieutenant, after-
wards Captain Dufrost de Lajemmerais,
and was born on October 15, 1701.
As her sister was, through her mar-
riage with Mr. Gamelin-Maugras, the
great-grandmother of the late Mon-
seigneur Tache, archbishop of St. Boni-
face, the Foundress of the Grey Nuns
was his great-grand-aunt, a fact which
the distinguished and much beloved
prelate was fond of recalling. It was
indeed a curious coincidence that the
most striking figure in the ecclesiastical
history of the Canadian Northwest
should have been related by the ties of
blood both to the discoverer of the Red
River country, La Verandrye, and to
the foundress of the sisterhood that
have identified themselves with the
spread of Catholicism in this western
land.

No wonder the Grey
Nuns have so great a de-
votion to the Cross of
Christ. The life of the Venerable Ma-
dame d'Youville is one succession of
crosses. Her father having died when
she was only seven years of age, and
the family being left almost destitute,
she soon learnt the valuable but pain-
ful lessons of adversity. At thirteen,

she seemed like a second mother to her
brothers and sisters. Her charm of
face and manner won her many admir-
ers among gentlemen of the best fam-
ilies, and yet she waited till she was
one and twenty before marrying Mr.
d'Youville, who, after all, was utterly
unworthy of the affection she bore him.
Her aged mother-in-law was so peevish
and capricious that visitors were prac-
tically excluded from the house. When
her husband died of pleurisy after
eight years of neglect and reckless ex-
penditure, leaving her burdened with
debts and the care of two boys, the
survivors of five children, she bravely
undertook to keep a little shop, and by
her skill in trade soon succeeded in pay-
ing off her husband's debts and even in
satisfying her own burning love for the
poor. The beginnings of her great work
were very humble: she and three young
ladies rented a house in which they re-
ceived four or five poor people; this
house of refuge was opened October 30,
1738. As soon as it became known in
the city of Montreal that the Sulpician
Fathers intended confiding to Madame
d'Youville the care of what was then
the General Hospital, an institution
founded as a brotherhood by devout but
uninspired and incompetent laymen
and then wretchedly mismanaged and
tottering to its ruin, the unreasoning
crowd turned upon these four defence-
less women, jeered at them as they went
to church and even pelted them with
stones. "Worse still," says Dean
Ramsay, "the most mischievous cal-
umnies were invented and circulated
against them, their traducers going so
far as to assert that, in contempt both
of the ecclesiastical law and of the
King's ordinances, these ladies sold in-
toxicating liquor to the Indians, and
even made use of it themselves. Strange
to say, these absurd calumnies were the
origin of their being called "Les Sœurs
Grises." The Sisters of Charity in
France had, in some towns, been called
"Sœurs Grises" because of their grey
costume; but the word "gris" has two
meanings: GREY and TIPSY; and in the
latter unfavorable sense it was first
applied to our good nuns. They humbly
accepted the name, and have made it
honored and esteemed."

Madame d'Youville's
Order has grown from
the small mustard seed
to the great tree with widespread-
ing branches. An interesting ap-
pendix informs us that the num-
ber of professed Grey Nuns in
1895 was 1358. The charitable and
educational institutions committed to
their care number 130; in the former
6,860 poor inmates are provided for, and
in the latter 21,594 children are instruct-
ed. We are treated to a graphic de-
scription, by a visitor, of the Mother-
house on Guy, Dorchester and St. Mat-
thew streets, Montreal, where 900 in-
mates of all ages, from the foundling to
the nonagenarian, are comforted and
made happy in their cheerful poverty.
The establishments of this noble sister-
hood stretch from Charlottetown, P. E.
I., in the extreme West to Providence,
on the shores of the Great Slave Lake,
in the extreme north and as far south as
Morristown, New Jersey. This wond-
erous development is a proof of the
Church's vitality and zeal in Canada.
Outside of Europe, there is probably no
country in the world that has originat-
ed and developed from its own unaided
resources so many flourishing sister-
hoods as the Province of Quebec. In other
lands in North and South America,
most of the convents are of European
origin, in so far at least that, though
they may have afterwards become in-
dependent of the Mother-House in
France or Spain or Portugal or Italy or
Germany, they began and were found-
ed by women who had come from
Europe or gone thither for their models;
but the Grey Nuns, like the Sisters
of Notre Dame, the Sisters of the
Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, the
Sisters of Providence and the Sisters of
St. Ann, were founded and recruited
chiefly by Canadian women according
to Canadian ideas and methods, they

are racy of the soil and intensely patri-
otic. One rises from the perusal of this
beautiful life of Madame d'Youville, so
tastefully printed by the Sisters them-
selves, so chastely illustrated by Paris-
ian artists, with a feeling of deep grati-
tude for the marvellously practical
Christian holiness already energizing a
century and a half ago in the Catholic
city of Villemarie. And then, looking
around Manitoba and the Northwest,
one feels with increasing thankfulness
that the good Sisters have not degenerat-
ed from the high thoughts and con-
stant self-denial of their Venerable
Mother.

CATHOLIC MYSTICISM.

The Holy Father's encyclical is one
sustained argument from Scripture and
tradition in proof of the existence of a
supernaturally guided Church. It an-
swers with irrefutable logic the univer-
sal human yearning after the supernat-
ural. Despite the favorite boast of our
age that it has cut itself loose from the
unseen, that unseen continually draws
men to it with "the cords of Adam,
with the bands of love." This magnetic
attraction explains the insane convul-
sions of a camp meeting devotee, who
hopes to attain by nervous emotion
what the grace of God alone can give,
the blind gropings of sincere spiritual-
ists and the superlative rant of the New
French Mysticism as expounded by M.
Fourniere. The Vicomte de Vogue says
of such dreamers: "They make desper-
ate efforts to invent a religious and
moral ideal on the margin of Catholic
doctrine. Extreme and unbalanced
minds seek this ideal in spiritism;
others wait patiently, with the hope
that dogma will become transformed
and lend itself to the interpretations of
science; the majority let themselves be
rocked in the lap of a vague mysticism.
They flutter around faith like iron fil-
ings around a magnet, secretly attract-
ed by it, and yet not strongly enough to
adhere to it."

A rational quest of the supernatural
is the exclusive heritage of the true
faith. Almost all Catholics have occa-
sional glimpses of the divine, glimpses
which prove that they are on the right
road. We say "almost all Catholics,"
for there appear some unfortunate ex-
ceptions, some practical Catholics who
have no moments of fervor, who seem
never to have felt the yearnings of God's
supreme love, parents who, while jeal-
ously guarding the morals of their
children and telling them to say their
prayers, never pray aloud with them,
people who, though partaking of the
Sacrament of Love three or four times
a year, shorten their thanksgiving in a
way that shocks pious souls. But these
are only exceptional cases, and even
they would probably be warmed to new
spiritual life were they to be told of the
solid consolations of Catholic mys-
ticism.

This beautiful theme forms the sub-
ject of one of the most remarkable con-
tributions to the Catholic culture of the
day, the article on "The Love of the
Mystics" by A. A. McGuiley in the
Catholic World for this month. The
writer comments, with much original
grasp of his theme, upon a new version
of the Dialogue of the Seraphic Virgin,
Catherine of Siena, translated from the
original Italian, with an introduction
on the study of mysticism by Algar
Thorold, a recent convert. The latter
is quoted as saying: "Mysticism is as
real a part of the experience of man as
the nervous system," and "so far from
its being a delusion it is one of the most
exact sciences." "The great mystics
are not maniacs revelling in individual
fantasies; they have but developed to
the full extent of their powers tenden-
cies existing, in germ at least, in all
normally developed men of all time." Further on, the reviewer puts the mat-
ter in this telling way: "Nothing can
satisfy the best longings of the soul but
the Infinite, because the Infinite alone
is perfect truth, and truth is the proper
food of the intellect. Mysticism is but
the logical explanation of this craving.
It explains it by a condensed syllogism
so simple that all can grasp its signific-

ance: 'for thyself, O God, thou hast
created us, and therefore our hearts
shall be restless until they rest in thee.'
The first law of psychology will accept
both the premisses and the conclusion.
Mysticism is the spiritual term, psychol-
ogy the natural term of the science of
the soul, and in an analysis of the
human consciousness the latter will
agree with the former that 'the desire
for ecstasy is at the very root of heart of
our nature.' 'This craving,' says Mr.
Thorold, 'when bound down by the an-
imal instincts, meets us on every side in
those hateful contortions of the social
organism called the dram-shop and the
brothel.' The soul shrinks from routine
and inactivity as the body shrinks from
death. Activity is the life of the soul
and ecstasy is the highest expression of
activity."

The mistake of the common herd is to
suppose that sensual love can give that
ecstasy which God alone, tasted and
loved after persevering self-denial, can
give. The reviewer then proceeds to
show how heresy has perverted human
love, by making it a selfish passion.
"The self-idea in Protestantism was
manifested almost at the beginning of
its career in the reigning thought of the
literature of that time, whose strongest
characteristic was the revival of the
sensual element. The restraining
hand of Catholic doctrine being lifted,
there was nothing now to keep men
from pouring forth from their hearts at
will and in full tide every emotion and
passion which the human heart can ex-
perience. No matter if souls might be
swept away by the onrushing tor-
rent, let art have its full swing and put
no check on the reins of genius. Catholic
doctrine might teach, if it will, that it
were better to lose a whole school of lit-
erature than that one human soul
should be sullied by an impure thought,
as it had proved that it were better to
lose a nation rather than mar the integ-
rity of the marriage sacrament. By such
teaching the world says it but proved
its ignorance and its inferiority to art.
But as the church has always, and will
ever, hold to a practice consistent with
her teachings, so, too, has heresy work-
ed out to a logical fulfilment the prom-
ises it gave at the beginning of its career.
The world no longer loves according to
the way the heart, illumined by the in-
tellect, dictates; it learns the art from
the modern novel, and uses it as a text-
book in which it finds the rules and
methods by which the art is best acquir-
ed. Men and women love as they have
learned to love from books. And at the
end of it all it is found that the text-
books have lied; their rules are false and
their methods failures. No Catholic, as
such, could write the naturalistic novel of
to-day; because the motive of such a
novel is founded on the principle that the
full gratification of sensual love is the be-
all and end-all of human happiness, and
this is a slander on human life. No child
of Adam would ever be willing to accept
as his full portion of happiness such gra-
tification; for that portion of his being,
his soul, which is the part that possesses
the largest capacity for happiness, is
left out of the reckoning altogether.
They who thus depict nature have
grasped but her feet of clay, and are
without the power to lift their eyes and see
Her godlike head crowned with spiritual fire
And touching other worlds."

THE EXHIBITION.

The directors of the Winnipeg Indus-
trial Exhibition Association are to be
congratulated on the immense success
they achieved this year. The fair open-
ed on Tuesday last and from then until
Saturday night the grounds and build-
ings were thronged with people inspect-
ing the exhibits and taking in the attrac-
tions. Never before has there been so
many visitors to the city from outside
points; the weather was, after the first
day, all that could be desired; the pro-
ducts of the country placed on exhibition
exceeded in number and excellence
those of any previous year, and in a
word, the success from every point of
view, was so great as to cause all patri-
otic Manitobans unalloyed joy and to
make them look forward with pleasure

to a repetition next year. It is worthy of
note in the Review that one or two of
the Catholic institutions of the country
shewed up well. In the competition for
general exhibits by Indian Industrial
schools a good collection of work was
put in by the principals of the St. John's,
Qu'appelle and St. Boniface schools.
They were each of such excellent char-
acter that the judges found it ex-
ceedingly difficult to award the place of
honor, but finally decided to give the
diploma to St. Boniface school and
divide the money prizes between the
three institutions. All three schools
secured prizes for single entries in other
classes in which the work exhibited
came into competition with the public
schools of the country and also with
other exhibitors. The Review heartily
congratulates the directors on the suc-
cess they met with, and particularly
bears witness to the fact that the smooth
working of the affair was due in no small
degree to the excellent way in which
Manager Heubach carried out the duties
of his office.

IS IT OBSTINACY OR BRUTALITY?

The subjoined clippings from the
Chatham Planet show either childish
stupidity or ruthless brutality. The
people have not declared against the
restoration of Catholic schools; on the
contrary, in the Protestant provinces St.
Charles Tupper had a majority for the
Remedial Bill, in the Catholic province
the majority is made up of men who
want to restore Catholic schools and who
differ only as to methods. The clipping
from the Toronto Telegram is inaccurate:
we never said anything about what
Archbishop Langevin wants, because
his people are at one with him, however
much the Telegram, with that tyrannical
brutality to which triumphant Protest-
antism has accustomed us, may strive to
isolate His Grace. The Telegram should
remember that the Laurier ministry is
not eternal. Every government that
does not settle this question will be over-
thrown. The secret societies with which
Ontario is honeycombed may delude
both the Planet and the Telegram into
feelings of fictitious might; but secret
plotters are sure to be exposed in the
long run and to fall before the honest
indignation of an outraged people.

CATHOLICS WILL NOT COMPROMISE.

The prospect of Mr. Laurier settling
the Manitoba school question satisfac-
torily to all parties concerned as he
promised is very remote. The last issue of
the Northwest Review (Catholic) says:
"If Messrs. Laurier and Greenway think
that we will accept at their hands the
toleration which is granted to our co-
religionists in Nova Scotia, who have no
legal status, no constitutional guarantees,
no Privy Council judgment at their
backs, they have failed utterly to gauge
the temper of the minority that has for
six years, against tremendous odds, so
nobly struggled for its rights. Again we
name our terms: 'Catholic schools or
nothing.'"
Still the Review forgets that Laurier
has a greater mandate than constitu-
tional guarantees or court judgments to
refuse to restore Catholic schools in
Manitoba. The people have declared
against that restoration in electing him
and that ends the matter or should, end
it so far as the Dominion is concerned.
It has been relegated to Manitoba and
to Manitoba the Northwest Review
should talk.—Planet.

The Northwest Review talks about
what the minority will accept and what
will satisfy Archbishop Langevin. That
sort of talk was in order before the elec-
tion. The issue has changed into a
question of not what the minority will
get, and since June 23, 1896, the duty of
the Government is to satisfy the country,
not Archbishop Langevin.—Toronto Tele-
gram.

If the minority get on the school ques-
tion what the Conservative party got on
that same question it will be "one in the
neck."—Planet.

A POINT ON UNITY.

The second part of Pope Leo's ency-
clical on Christian unity, which we pub-
lish this week, is a development on that
unswerving appeal to first principles on
which we commented in our last issue.
The veiled language of diplomacy and
the subtle shirking of difficult points
have no place in this, the most remark-
able manifesto of our time. No Catho-
lic who has been grounded in his Cate-
chism could have entertained any doubt
as to the nature and conditions of the
unity which our Lord instituted in
founding His Church as the ark of salva-
tion, but the press has recently made as