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Editor-in-Chief.

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Northwest Review.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 9, 1893.

CURRENT COMMENT.

The article we reprint elsewhere from the St. Louis Review on "A Catholic Encyclopaedia" comes as striking confirmation of our remarks on the same subject last week. Evidently the Encyclopaedic Dictionary is not trustworthy.

It is a curious coincidence that Bismarck should have died on the eve of the feast of St. Ignatius Loyala, whose sons he expelled from Germany about twenty-five years ago. Bismarck dies; they live and will soon get back to the Fatherland.

We read in a Winnipeg contemporary: "Mrs. T. A. (née Miss W.)" If that paragraph writer knew what "née" means, he he would save himself the trouble of putting "Miss" before it. Fancy a baby being born "Miss W." We need hardly add that "née" should be followed simply and solely by the maiden family name of the married woman: Mrs. A. B. Circus (née Clown).

Claude M. Girardeau, who signs "Father Falconer's victory" in the August CATHOLIC WORLD, is, it appears, a woman and a convert. Her picture of slavery in the Southern States just before the Civil War is rather sketchy and indefinite, so that the general effect is not particularly telling; but some of the details are painted in with a masterly touch and the dialogue flashes with thrust and parry.

The late lamented Monseigneur Laffèche, bishop of Three Rivers, was, at the time of his death, the oldest Catholic bishop in Canada. This position is now held by Mgr. Sweeny, the venerable bishop of St. John, N. B., who was born in May, 1820. The next in point of age is Mgr. Rogers, Bishop of Chatham, N. B., who was born in July, 1826. But the senior Bishop of the Dominion, as to duration of episcopate, is Monseigneur Grandin, O. M. I., the saintly bishop of St. Albert, who was consecrated November 30, 1859. This fact is often overlooked because Mgr.

Grandin is only in his seventieth year, having been born Feb. 8, 1829; but he was consecrated at the age of thirty and will soon begin the fortieth year of his episcopate. Bishop Sweeny comes next, having been consecrated April 15, 1860, and he is closely followed by Bishop Rogers, the date of whose consecration is August 15, 1860.

"Personal Recollections of Two Cardinals," by an ex-Anglican, in the July number of the CATHOLIC WORLD is the sort of article one should pigeon-hole for future reference. A charming, clever woman, as she indirectly reveals herself to be, chats of Cardinals Wiseman and Newman with the vivaciousness and transparent veracity of one who was on terms of reverent intimacy with the former and devoted friendship with the latter. Nothing half so bright and yet so valuable has appeared for many a moon in our cisatlantic magazines.

From the editorial page of "United Canada" on the day on which it appeared in what its editor calls "a new drest," we cull the following gems: "conceded," "Church doctrine and DECIPLINE," "The Fathers of Confederation.....they realized" (This is like the street urchin's double or triple nominative: "Jack, he sez to me, sez he."); "issues purely effecting (instead of "affecting") race and religious animosities;" "Every governor general...HAVE soon come;" "irresistably;" "floriday water patriots" and "Floriday water Liberal;" "he reminds us of the wild OSTRAGE [sic!] WHO HIDES ITS head in the desert sands and TRYS to kick the stars with its heels;" "stood SPONCER;" "where the late Archbishop Cleary was stationed when he was appointed to the Canadian SEA (of Kingston);" "the statement is AUTHORITIVELY (as this syncopated form of "authoritatively" is repeated elsewhere, it cannot be a mere misprint); "outsiders from abroad HAS never been thought of;" "severalFAIKERS..... were always on the ELERT;" "the governing GENIOUS.....of the Sovereign Pontiff." And yet the editor has the audacity to say that we find fault with him mostly for a "turned letter." Fortunately for him the generality of his subscribers are as uncertain as himself in the realms of grammar and spelling. Oddly enough he himself has the naiveté to quote from the Renfrew Mercury the following words which we heartily endorse: "We find that even his own people do not take the editor of UNITED CANADA very seriously. We are afraid that our Ottawa contemporary will not be able to help very much towards building up a really United Canada while he writes in such a strain."

NOTES BY THE WAY.

The manager of the Kickapoo Indian Medicine Company, which for the past week has been giving free entertainments on a vacant lot on Logan street, states that though he has travelled over most of the continent he has never come in contact with such unruly children as he sees in Winnipeg, and, he added, addressing the youngsters who thronged about the plat-

form from which he was speaking, "I am very sorry for your parents who evidently have no control over you." We have no hesitation in saying that the Medicine man had excellent ground for his statement, for a more disorderly and foul-mouthed crowd of children could not, we are sure, be gathered together in any city in the world than can be assembled in this metropolis of Manitoba. Never in our experience have we heard such fearful blasphemies and such horrible profanity as we heard coming from the mouths of well-dressed children of school age on the evening to which we refer, and equally sad and significant was the utter want of respect for authority which was evidenced by their general behaviour and by the impudent way in which they turned on one or two citizens standing near who ventured to speak to them regarding their conduct.

There are many fond parents in Winnipeg who will say this does not concern them inasmuch as it cannot refer to their children, but in this they are mistaken, for it is a matter that should interest every head of a family. It is impossible for parents always to have an eye on their little ones, and in this democratic country where children of all classes meet at the same school none are safe from contamination and the vice will go on spreading as it evidently has done during the past few years. We cannot understand how it is that our citizens who are usually so clear headed in all matters affecting their personal affairs cannot see the gravity of the situation and take steps to effect a cure, by providing religious instruction for the children who certainly do not, under present conditions, receive any worthy of the name. The experience of the past proves that this is the only way in which youth can be properly trained up in the way it should go and yet the majority of our people are contented with a system under which the children attend schools where this important branch of education is absolutely ignored, whilst only a very small percentage of of them go to Sunday schools for an hour or so on the first day of the week.

The Free Press has been sailing a very strange course of late. We do not mean to say that this is a new proceeding on the part of our daily contemporary, for it rarely pursues the same direction steadily for more than a day or two in succession, but we venture to assert that in the instance to which we refer it has got into exceptionally dangerous waters and has shown even less level-headedness and consistency than usual. We allude to a series of articles on the British Navy and incidental matters which appeared in "the Great Moral Daily" the week before last. We are told therein that the lesson to be learned from the American success at Santiago is that British naval methods are behind the times, that British ships are of an inferior class, and that British gunners can shoot neither fast nor straight. We are further treated to long extracts from a magazine article written by a Russian in which

it is claimed that Great Britain could easily be reduced to the rank of a third-rate power by the continental powers of Europe whenever they think it important enough to do so, which claim the Free Press seems to endorse. This is, surely, a very strange position to be taken by a Canadian newspaper, and it is not at all relished by readers of the Free Press as we know from criticisms which have been passed in our hearing. British subjects all over the world have an abiding and well-grounded faith in the navy, and, foreign critics to the contrary notwithstanding, they have no fear that Great Britain is less able nowadays to maintain its position than it was in the glorious days of the past.

Speaking at the luncheon given to the visiting American journalists the week before last, Mr. Jameson, M. P., made the very silly statement that the great reason Canadians admired President McKinley, was because he refused to listen to or be influenced by the "jingo." We question whether our brilliant(!) representative could have made a more unfortunate remark, for it is admitted on all hands that the present war was forced on the President much against his will by the "jingo" press and "jingo" senators whom he no doubt attempted to restrain but to whom in the end he most weakly gave way. Everyone of Mr. Jameson's hearers knew this perfectly well, and, besides, there was doubtless many a "jingo" amongst them.

Blessing the Grapes near Constantinople on the Feast of the ASSUMPTION.

Written for the Review.

I once saw an interesting incident in a little Catholic Church in a village on the Bosphorus, and that was the blessing of the grapes.

The Church was filled with worshippers, of all nations, it seemed to me (newly arrived from England where we are not accustomed to see so many nationalities), but here there were French, English, Italians, Poles, Croats, Slavonians, Americans and Greek Catholics, I also noticed a Maltese woman with the picturesque veil they always wear out of doors, which gives them the appearance of nuns. It was on the Faast of the Assumption, that I made one of the congregation at Mass, in this far-off Turkish village.

The Priest was an Armenian Catholic, who looked very dignified beautiful in his vestments and dark beard (the clergy in those Eastern lands are not shaven as is the custom with priests of other countries in Europe). There was no sermon for it would have been difficult to know in what language to preach to that mixed congregation. What struck me was the devout and reverent demeanour of some of the Croats; unlettered men they evidently were and their appearance was fierce, but the FAITH it was easy to see was deeply rooted in their hearts.

I noticed in one corner of the Church near the Altar, a table covered with a white cloth on which was a tray filled with the most beautiful grapes, white

and purple, piled up in bunches to form a pyramid. After Mass was over the good Priest proceeded to the table and blessed the fruit, reciting prayers and sprinkling it with holy water; he then withdrew into the sacristy, after which each one of the congregation approached the table and took a bunch of grapes which they brought away smiling and happy-looking, and commenced eating on their way home and offering to friends. I asked the meaning of this little ceremony. They explained that many Catholics will not even taste a grape till after the fifteenth of August, the Feast of the Assumption, the day they are blessed by the Church. The motive is to offer the first-fruits of the vine to our Maker, a poetic and beautiful idea I thought, and was it fancy or reality that the grapes I ate that morning tasted sweeter than any other partaken of before or after! No, it was not fancy, for the Church's prayer and blessing shed a peace and halo on everything.

UNFAMILIAR FACTS.

Written for the Review.

It has been lately ascertained, by careful calculation of parallaxes, that the light from the brightest stars of the Dipper or Great Bear (Charles's Wain) constellation averages 200 years in its journey earthwards; so that we are now looking at Ursa Major as it was at the end of the seventeenth century when William and Mary reigned in England and Louis XIV. in France.

Edmund Spenser, the Elizabethan poet, enjoys an exaggerated reputation due to his intense Protestantism. There is far more sound than sense in his poetry. Even his greatest work, "The Faerie Queene" is, especially in its latter portion, an inextricable tangle of unintelligible criss-cross allegories. Were it not for his rabid rage at everything Catholic he would have long since been consigned to the shelf of melodious unthinking poets. To mention this narrow-minded bigot, as so many histories of English literature do, in the same breath as Shakespeare is akin to blasphemy. Shakespeare dominates even the Protestant world though he never panders to its ignorant prejudices; Spenser is glibly talked of, albeit seldom read, by that same Protestant world, chiefly because he fans the flame of its smouldering fanaticism.

It is a mistake to suppose that the Russian Church has any practical belief in the Real Presence. Though its formularies affirm and its votaries profess this belief, the careless treatment by their priests of the sacred host proves that they do not realize what the Blessed Sacrament is. When the Russian priest wishes to reserve the communion for the sick, he dips the species of the bread in the species of the wine and then locks it up—not in a tabernacle with a lamp before it in the church—but in a mere drawer in the vestry. After a few hours in warm weather and a few days in winter the species are so decomposed that they no longer look like either bread or wine and therefore, according to Catholic doctrine, the Real Presence is no longer there.