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TUESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1899

CURRENT COMMENT

The editor of the Providence Visitor, Rev. Thomas L. Kelly, is past master in the art of politely pulverizing an adversary. Scarcely have we read anything so delightful as his latest reply (Aug. 8th) to that strangely voluble person, Mr. Merwin-Marie Snell. There is no venom in Father Kelly. His satire is delicate and, though stingless, absolutely irresistible.

Although most of the money stolen from the Molson's Bank, Winnipeg, has been recovered by what is said to be very clever amateur detective work, the general feeling in the city is that the mystery is not by any means cleared up, and that J. W. Anderson is most probably innocent.

Father Fallon's most recent masterly letter on the Coronation oath reached us last week just too late for that issue. It has since appeared in the Montreal Star of the 7th inst. and in several other other papers. It ought to be given the widest possible circulation. Though glowing with honest indignation it does not contain one word that is not supported by facts. Unfortunately, so long as the hoi polloi prefer husks to solid food, the Transvaal resolution, being pure flummery, will be eagerly swallowed, while the Coronation oath protests, being too solid and wholesome to be digested by sickly stomachs, will be severely ignored.

Better late than never. La Presse of Montreal has discovered in our columns a letter from Monseigneur Clut, O.M.I., the "Bishop of the North Pole," which we published five or six months ago. It is duly credited, but of course without date.

One of the most soul-stirring articles we have seen for many a year is to be found in Donahoe's Magazine for August. It is "The Mystic Life," by Susan L. Emery. With an accurate and astonishingly wide knowledge of theology, this lady skilfully works out a proof of the exist-

ence of God from the spiritual experiences of the contemplative life as exemplified in the Carmelite order. She promises another article in which she will study the tremendous practical possibilities of the mystical life, and the glimpses she has here given us make us long for a fuller and more minute view.

One of the most valuable episodes in Father Walworth's interesting reminiscences of England fifty years ago is the well known garbling of a quotation from St. Gregory the Great. Father Walworth's experience with this "hardy annual" is to be found in another column. We have no doubt this lie is current among many Anglicans in this country, for we distinctly remember a prominent Anglican divine of Winnipeg doing his best to galvanize it a few years ago.

We read, in the Oblate's Missionary Record for August, that Bishop Jolivet, O.M.I., Vicar Apostolic of Natal, has been keeping a triple jubilee: fifty years a priest and an Oblate and twenty-five years a bishop. The date was May 14 of this year; the place, St. Mary's Church, Pietermaritzburg. In an eloquent sermon at the celebration Bishop Gaughran, O.M.I., of Kimberley, said that, 25 years ago, in the old vicariate of Natal, there were six priests, now there are 114; then there were three religious brothers, now there are 284; then there were eight nuns, now there are 867; then there were five churches, now there are 81; then there was not a single Catholic boarding school, now there are 46; then there were but two or three Catholic schools, now there are 82. Bishop Gaughran "had no intention whatever of attributing to their beloved Bishop all the work that had been done, but this he would say, Bishop Jolivet had initiated the movement; he had called others to his aid, and helped them by his advice, and certainly by his example, giving them courage."

THAT CATHOLIC PARTY.

"Le Monde Canadien," which is a kind of weekly sequel to the defunct daily "Minerve," and is edited by Mr. G. A. Nantel, contains, in its issue of the 3rd inst., a deplorably flippant, shallow and ungentlemanly article entitled "A Centre or Catholic Party." It opens with these words: "The one member of the Catholic party of the province of Quebec, Mr. Tardivel, has just found at last, an ally in THE NORTHWEST REVIEW of Manitoba. We congratulate our amiable contemporary on this success, all the more enviable because the Manitoba journal relies, for the launching forth of its idea, not on a religious question, but on a purely human matter such as the administration of the Yukon district. This shows what sort of dressing the Catholic party would be willing to be served up in.

"This idea of founding a Catholic party in Canada is the acme of absurdity. What right has anybody to take the name of the Catholic religion and make it a wrap-rascal for a political party? "Nothing is or can be Catholic but the religion, the Church,

the hierarchy governed by the Sovereign Pontiff and made up of the bishops, the priests. The nature, the very essence of a political party will always prevent its being called Catholic.

"A maniac of Tardivel's stamp may, indeed, wrap in the misfit venture of this sacred name the vagaries of his mind. Here, in this country, he is known and people set no store by him. But a serious publication like THE NORTHWEST REVIEW ought to avoid falling into such an aberration.

"Besides, who in the world has granted leave, either to Mr. Tardivel or to THE NORTHWEST REVIEW to use the Catholic name as a cloak for a purely human association. Is it the Pope? Is it the bishops?"

Precisely, Mr. Nantel. You have been fearing this all along your senseless tirade, and it is time to answer you just here. Your conscience tells you it is the bishops, it is the Pope. We may add it is the most elementary use of reason—which you seem unable to use at all—that gives us leave to call into being a Catholic party.

The rest of your article is but a repetition of the groundless assertions and blackguardly insults of which the portion we have quoted is exclusively composed. There being no proofs we shall confine ourselves to your very strange affirmations.

If it is the acme of absurdity to found a Catholic party in Canada we share that pinnacle of folly with His Holiness Leo XIII. In his encyclical of Dec. 8, 1897, to the Bishops of Canada, the Pope said: "It is still more to be regretted that the Canadian Catholics themselves were not at all united, as they ought to have been, in the defence of a cause which so closely concerns them all, and the vast interest and importance of which ought to have silenced political partisanship, which is a matter of such inferior consequence." By these words the Sovereign Pontiff distinctly teaches that political partisanship ought to be silenced wherever matters of importance to Catholics are at stake, and that is all we mean by a Catholic party. The members of a Catholic party need be united only on strictly Catholic questions; on other questions they could vote with either Liberals or Conservatives.

If this idea is the acme of absurdity, we share it in company with our Right Rev. Father in God, the Archbishop of St. Boniface, who has over and over again publicly expressed his earnest advocacy of this view and who, quite lately, authorized us to state that he "would prefer candidates to come out as independent of either party." (NORTHWEST REVIEW, June 27, p. 2, col. 4.)

Mr. Nantel pretends that only the religion we profess and our priests can be called Catholic. What about the laity? What about himself? True, he subsequently contradicts himself and maintains that he is as good a Catholic as Tardivel; but he thereby forgets that he has called Tardivel a crank, a maniac and other choice names. Evidently, the editor of Le Monde Canadien is so hard hit that he loses his head and can do nothing but curse and shriek like a fishwife. The impression he

thus produces is that he must be defending a very bad case.

What underlies his vaporing is the rationalistic theory that religion must be relegated to the sacristy. On the contrary religion rules the entire life of a true Catholic. The error of religious Liberalism consists in divorcing a man's politics from his faith. In private he may be pious, but in public he must vote with his party even if that party antagonize the Church. This is a monstrosity, a stultification of reason enlightened by divine faith. And the only sure way of escaping from this unnatural, this monstrous bondage is that all Catholics should unite, as they have in Germany and Belgium with such splendid results.

Mr. Tardivel may safely be left to chastise Mr. Nantel as he deserves. The former wields a potent pen and knows how to argue; the latter has only a few tricks of style which he works more than they are worth. We would merely remark that Mr. Tardivel's paper, which admits no advertisements, could not exist unless he had at least several hundred earnest supporters, and that he has no ambition to be the leader of the growing Catholic party; all that he wants is to see it take shape and life, whoever may be the leader thereof.

One word more as to our instancing a purely human matter as a proof of the desirableness of a Catholic party. Mr. Nantel finds it strange that a Catholic party would interest itself in the administration of the Yukon.

Why not, pray? A Catholic party would make for truth in all questions. It would hold the balance tone between the exaggerated invectives of the Opposition and the exaggerated whitewashings of the Government. Wherever robbery and impurity were to be unmasked the Catholic party, seeking first the observance of God's commandments, would be fearless and incorruptible. Few indeed are the political questions which do not touch on morals. For instance, how could an independent Catholic vote for a railway subsidy that would present to two contractors fifteen hundred thousand dollars of the people's money over and above all the expenses of railway construction?

NOTES BY THE WAY.

The proceedings of the Church of England Synod would not under ordinary circumstances form a subject of discussion or consideration in these columns for nothing would be further from our desire than to intrude on the internal concerns of any of the sects. It happens, however, that frequently in gatherings of the kind something is brought up of public interest and we consider that the sermon of the Bishop of Qu'Appelle delivered at the opening of the Synod and published in full in last Saturday's issue of the Telegram contained some points to which we may without offence refer. The sermon was a labored but in some respects a manly effort to justify the existence of the Church of England and to outline its particular importance in view of the requirements of the present time, but what it pos-

sessed in manliness—and by this we mean that quality which an enlisted soldier will sometimes show who has attempted a rash undertaking in defence of his flag or for the honor of his cloth—it sadly lacked in logic, and therefore it was a truly typical Church of England deliverance. For instance it is an admirable thing to hear a bishop boldly declare that "the church has one, eternal universal message which never changes," but one may doubt the appropriateness of such a declaration when made on behalf of an establishment such as the Elizabethan invention which has almost as many forms of doctrine as it has bishops and when even those divines who were listening to the sermon are well known to hold a startling diversity of opinion and teaching on fundamental points. Again, in view of all that is known as to the real character of "the Reformers" who have been described by a leading light of the English Church as "a set of unredeemed villains," it was perhaps a plucky thing of the bishop in the desperation of his position to come to their rescue with the assertion that "they were men of sound common sense; judicious, true-hearted Englishmen," but such an assertion was under the circumstances no more convincing than the one that almost immediately followed it: "The Church of England is indeed Catholic, but yet she is Protestant," which is an absurdity and much as if the bishop had oracularly declared "Light is darkness" and expected people to believe him.

We cannot go sentence by sentence all through the discourse. The bishop spoke of "standing firm in the maintenance of the truth and freedom which the church conquered for herself at the Reformation," when everyone knows that all that was accomplished at that time was the creation of a new state department of so-called religion which has ever since remained the "Anglican Church as by law established," the slave and sport of politicians. Later on the bishop qualified his former statement regarding the "Church Catholic" by saying that "she occupies a unique position—a distinct and definite place in the church Catholic." Having previously tried in turn to please the Low churchman and the High churchman he here seems to be attempting to satisfy those amongst his hearers who hold to the branch theory. He speaks at great length in glowing terms of the past history and the future prospects of the church, but surely in these parts of his discourse he showed himself the possessor of a vivid imagination and can hardly have expected to be taken seriously by a public who know that the past history of the Anglican Church is a series of compromises and of unfaithfulness to the mission which she professed and that her prospects for the future are disruption and decay.

Before closing his sermon the bishop made some remarks which must have given Archdeacon Fortin a most uncomfortable quarter of an hour. It is hardly to be doubted that the bishop's references to the