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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

What will 1896 bring to us all? We trust it may be for our readers a truly happy year. Will the School Question be settled in the course of the coming twelvemonth? God grant it may. But if not this year, then it surely will be later. The Church is immortal and never gives up. The Local Government has appealed to the people in the hope of keeping or increasing its majority. The people are getting tired of Mr. Greenway; they are beginning to realize that the sweets of office are his first and only principle. It is, to put it mildly, very doubtful if the popular response will be what he expects.

We print exactly as we received it a short poem on two of God's secrets. Though it may not follow the canons of poetic art, yet it is full of poetic thought. We have no idea who Mary Tupper may be, nor can we imagine why she puts September as the date of a contribution sent us last week. Her reference to Ps. xxv., 14, shows that she uses the Protestant Bible, where the text reads: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will shew them His covenant." From the 9th to the 147th psalm the Catholic numbering is one behind the Protestant; thus, in the Douay version the reference would be to Ps. xxiv., 14, which reads: "The Lord is a firmament to them that fear Him, and His covenant shall be made manifest to them." The reference to Prov. iii., 32, also betrays the Protestant text: "For the perverse is an abomination to the Lord; but His secret is with the upright;" whereas the Douay text is: "For every mocker is an abomination to the Lord, and His communication is with the simple."

New Year's Day being the anniversary of the arrival of the Blenheim last year with the remains of the late Sir John Thompson, we have thought our readers would like to be reminded in glowing stanzas of the dramatic incidents with which the great statesman's career was closed to mortal eyes. No grander tribute has been paid to the "Deathless Dead" than this, from the facile and forceful pen of Dr. J. K. Foran, the accomplished editor of the True Witness. No collection of Canadian poets can afford to omit "Poems and Lyrics" by this truly gifted author. This book is a mine of graceful expressions and deep thoughts. There are some for every taste, patriotic, historical, and descriptive, memorial and patriotic, religious, dramatic, humorous and juvenile, Indian, yea, even Jesuit poems. But among all these varied gems none is more finished,

none better suited to its lofty theme than the poem we print on our first page. It forces us to listen

While the heart of all the Empire
Seems to beat in muffled tone,
As the news of death is speeding
Round the world, from zone to zone.

And, after reading the whole touching threnody, we realize how true it is even at this date that

The nation weepeth
O'er her dead but deathless son.

In a recent editorial the Free Press deprecates the issuing of the Women's Bible as likely to disparage the sacred volume. This is a typical Protestant view: afraid that the idiotic commentaries of a bevy of female faddists will affect the standing of the sacred text! Perhaps, after all, they may in the Protestant world where quantity usurps the place of quality, when the opinions of two dunces, simply because they are two, outweigh the judgment of one expert. But all the Protestant commentaries, orthodox, latitudinarian and blasphemous, from Luther's time to the disappearance of Protestantism from the stage, will not produce the slightest effect upon the Catholic world's reverence for the Word of God. We Catholics prefer the enlightened opinion of one learned and pious commentator to all the more or less mendacious and completely irresponsible and unverifiable inventions of what sycophants have dubbed "the higher criticism." Now the higher criticism is not quite so ridiculous as the "Woman's Bible" with its female element in the Godhead. What, then, must be the measure of our contempt for the latter? Simply, that it cannot disparage anything but its authors, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Kate Bushnell and other still "weaker vessels."

Mr. Fisher's letters are always exhaustive; but in the first of his new series, published in last Friday's Nor-Wester, he has really surpassed himself in clearness, judicial temper and irresistible cogency. After granting that the Dominion Parliament is not legally and technically bound to give redress to the Catholic minority, he goes on to show that it is morally obliged to do so. In order to prove this contention he addresses himself in this letter to the demolition of that bugbear, "provincial rights." Albeit provincial autonomy is the central doctrine of Confederation, it was "disfigured almost beyond recognition" by the Protestants of Quebec in matters educational. The story of how they insisted upon limiting local rights, how Sir Alexander Galt threw up his portfolio and retired from the cabinet because the pledge to Protestants had not been fulfilled soon enough, how a petition from the Association of Protestant Teachers was laid at the foot of the Throne, how Sir Alexander was asked to be one of the Confederation delegates in London and wrote in his own hand the rough draft of what afterwards became the remedial clause, all this is told in a most interesting and lucid way by Mr. Fisher.

The following passage forcibly sums up his main argument: "Provincial autonomy we are told in these days must be respected, and parliament must not intervene in a matter of educational law to thwart the will of a provincial majority. But when the rights of the Protestants of Quebec were at stake, the will of the provincial majority was no to prevail against them. Nay, the reason for committing the cause of that minority to the protection of the Federal power, was because protection was needed against the provincial majority, which must never be permitted to prevail against the privileges of the Protestant minority."

Such was the spirit and letter of the Constitution when it was framed for the purpose of protecting the Protestants of Quebec. For the protection of the minority in Manitoba there is the like provision—no more, no less. The Federal authorities must not coerce Manitoba we are told. And the proposition is a good one, in which I heartily concur. In the case of Manitoba it is "coercion"—is it?—for the Federal authorities to entertain

an appeal specially provided by the Constitution for the protection of a section of Her Majesty's subjects. But in the case of Quebec under a like measure, it is otherwise. The inviolable doctrine of provincial autonomy must never be sacrificed in order to maintain the rights of the Manitoba minority, even by the exercise of a power expressly conferred on parliament for that purpose. But in the case of Quebec, that sacred doctrine must be scattered to the four winds of heaven, rather than that the minority should have to submit to the will of the provincial majority."

A BAD BEGINNING.

The Manitoba Legislature has been dissolved and writs issued for a new election, to be held on the 15th January. Afraid to meet the people in a fair fight, the Government spring a surprise on the opposition and rush the elections before they have time to organize. And as if this were not enough, they use the School question to appeal to the ignorant prejudices of that portion of the religious majority in whom they have heretofore found their chief support. The remark of a leading New York journal, in criticising secretary Olney's note to Lord Salisbury, can be applied to Mr. Greenway's address to his constituents—it "begins with a falsehood." He speaks of the "menacing attitude assumed by the Dominion Government," in hastily issuing "a remedial order which commanded the Legislation of Manitoba to restore the Separate School system as it existed prior to 1890." The remedial order was not issued hastily, as ample time was taken to consider it; and if it were, the fact could in no way affect the merits of the question. It was based on the lines of the judgment of the Privy Council, in which the opinion is given: "It is certainly not essential that the statutes repealed by the act of 1890 should be re-enacted, or that the precise provisions of these statutes should again be made law." This is sufficient answer to the statement with which Mr. Greenway begins his address. No one has assumed that the Federal Government, in their remedial order, have exceeded or would exceed the authority vested in them by the judgment of the Privy Council. They, therefore, could not order the restoration of the old system, and as a matter of fact did not. But they did order, as they were bound to do, that the grievance which the Privy Council found to exist should be remedied. They did not even require that the lines of their order should be strictly followed. In the Order-in-Council of July last, replying to the rejoinder of the Manitoba Government, they say: "It by no means follows that it is the duty of the Federal Government to insist that Provincial Legislation, to be mutually satisfactory, should follow the exact lines of this order. It is hoped, however, that a middle course will commend itself to the Local authorities, that Federal action may become unnecessary." If these extracts are not enough to convict the Premier of falsehood, we shall quote from the final reply of his own Government, made on the 21st inst. Referring to "public utterances on the matter in question, Mr. Greenway's Order-in-Council says: "It would appear reasonable to conclude that no one could seriously contemplate the restoration of that system." Yet in the face of all this, the leader of the Government begins his campaign manifesto with the statement that "the Dominion Privy Council hastily issued a remedial order which commanded the Legislature of Manitoba to restore the Separate School system as it existed prior to 1890."

From a campaign thus begun misrepresentation of any and every kind is to be expected. The address also speaks of "coercion," and it is already abundantly manifest that this is to be the popular cry of the elections. The people are to be roused by telling them that the Province is to be coerced. The statement has frequently been made that the judgment of the Privy Council did not call for a remedial order or for

action of any kind. That judgment says: "Their Lordships have decided that... the appeal is well founded, but the particular course to be pursued must be determined by the authorities to whom it has been committed by the statute. It is not for this tribunal to intimate the precise steps to be taken." The particular course to be pursued, the precise steps to be taken. Some steps have to be taken, some course pursued. That is obvious from the language of the judgment. It does not say that nothing need be done. Some action is necessary, but the precise character of it is left to "the authorities to whom it has been committed by the statute." The statute and all the proceedings under it would be a farce if the whole matter ended with the judgment. The next step was the formal remedial order, which was a necessity of that judgment. It is not coercion, but a lawful and essential proceeding under the statute, as interpreted by the Privy Council, and obedience to which has been commended by Her Majesty-in-Council to all her faithful subjects in Canada. But the demon of intolerance is abroad in the land, and neither respect for the law nor consideration for the rights of the minority will have any influence in the elections now pending.

THE THREE TAILORS OF TOOLEY STREET.

The readers of the daily press were recently treated to a repetition of the Tooley street tailors. Three obscure "Irish-Americans" have undertaken to right the wrongs of Ireland in a flaring manifesto to the President of the United States, wherein they offer to place at the disposal of that politico-belligerent gentleman "a hundred thousand soldiers," to wipe off from the map of the world the British Empire. These three obscure individuals, who have made this blood-thirsty proposal to President Cleveland, could not command the attendance of more than three—and these three are not the stuff of which soldiers are made. Nevertheless, it is very humiliating to the true friends of Ireland to have to read of the mad vapourings of these crazy vagabonds, who would not sacrifice their own worthless skins to free any one. Ireland will have Home Rule some day, and it will be won by men who are true and loyal citizens of the British Empire. The folly of the Fenian wing, of which this trio are members, instead of hastening that day, will postpone it, by alienating from our cause men who, not understanding the true character of our leaders and the cause they advocate, will accept such utterances as inseparable from the Home Rule movement which repudiates them.

QUEBEC VS. MANITOBA.

The following despatch, clipped from the Free Press, comes to us with refreshing odor at a time when the Greenway government and its reptile press are making frantic appeals to the electors of Manitoba to return them to power because they have been persecutors of the co-religionists and compatriots of the Catholic majority in the province of Quebec. This despatch sets forth in the strongest light the difference between Catholics and Protestants when in the ascendancy, and must bring the blush of shame to the cheeks of all tolerant professors of Protestantism in Canada. Let the men who mendaciously and with malicious intent charge the Catholic Church with narrowness and intolerance read this despatch, stop their slanders and take to heart the words of a Catholic Premier:

"QUEBEC, Dec. 23.

The legislature prorogued Saturday night. Before closing Mr. Morris, minister without portfolio, said he wished to state that since his entry into the cabinet every suggestion or representation made by him on behalf of the Protestant minority had received the utmost consideration, and no reasonable demand had been refused. There had been on all sides a desire to recognize the rights of the minority.

Premier Taillon said he was glad to hear Mr. Morris' remarks, because it would tend to dispel the impression which it had been sought to create in some quarters.

Mr. Stephens said the Protestants never had much cause to complain, and he did not want another impression to go forth.

The premier was happy to see such breadth of mind, and said some of the other provinces which he need not name might draw a lesson therefrom. This closed the incident."

THIS IS FROM UNITED CANADA.

"If Protestantism requires a guardian angel, for Heaven's sake let them have one, but they should not insist on having the aforsaid angel in the councils of the country, or to expect Catholics to pay for his support. Now that the Government has got rid of Mr. Wallace, the professional Protestant, they should try to get rid of the Catholic demagogues also. They could afford to lose [sic] Colonel Amyott in Quebec and one or two others in Manitoba."

It is difficult to say what kind of an "angel" United Canada most needs. The Catholics of Canada, who have to witness its weekly contributions to Catholic (?) literature will probably look upon that journal itself as a painfully "acute angle"—especially those who are in any way sensitive on the score of literary merit in a Catholic newspaper.

THE HISTORIAN FROUDE.

Mr. W. S. Lilly's Remarks on the Writings of the Unhistorical Historian.

Mr. W. S. Lilly, writing in the Nineteenth Century, says of Mr. Froude:—"I take it that he may properly be ranked among the greatest masters of word-painting in the English language. There are passages in his writings—for example, his account of the judicial murder of Sir Thomas More, or of the destruction of the French and Spanish floating batteries before Gibraltar—which have seldom been surpassed in splendor of diction and dramatic power. But here all the praise that can be honestly bestowed upon him ends. He was incapable of critically investigating facts. Nay, he was incapable, congenitally incapable, I believe, even of correctly stating them. A less judicial mind probably never existed. There is hardly a page of his which is not deformed by passion, prejudice, and paradox. He is everywhere an advocate, and an utterly unscrupulous advocate. His predecessor in the Chair of Modern History at Oxford once said:—"When we have read Mr. Froude's account of any matter, we know, at all events, one way in which it did not happen." I think [this was too strongly said. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, the father of lies himself sometimes tells the truth: "INTERDUM DIABOLUS VERITATEM LOQUITUR." I would put the matter somewhat differently. It has happened to me, in the course of my own poor historical studies, to go over much of the ground trodden by Mr. Froude. And the conclusion to which I was long ago led is that it is never safe to accept any statement upon Mr. Froude's mere word. It is, however, only lately that my eyes were open to the full extent of what is euphemistically called his inaccuracy. In the autumn of last year his book on Erasmus reached me. On turning over its fascinating pages I was much taken aback by some of the things attributed to the great humanist in the 'abbreviated translations' of his letters. I chanced at the time to be myself deep in Erasmus, an author whom I have for some years carefully and closely studied; and the folios of the Leyden edition of his works lay before me. I proceeded to compare Mr. Froude's 'abbreviated translations' with the original, and I confess, the result transcended my expectations. I found in well nigh every page, distortions, more or less gross—sometimes very gross—of Erasmus's meaning; things attributed to him directly contrary to what he really wrote; things of which the Latin presents no trace at all. What is the explanation of this irrational devotion to 'the thing that is not'? In the Catechism of the Council of Trent, mendacity is described as 'a disease of the mind generally incurable.' I believe that with some persons this disease is congenital, just as kleptomania is with others. Probably most of us have personally known sufferers from pseudomania. To take an example from fiction, the Rev. Charles Honeyman, in Thackeray's novel, appears to have been thus afflicted. 'Charles,' said Fred Bayham, 'you had, even from your youth up, a villainous habit; it's my belief you'd rather lie than not.' I once heard of a pseudomaniac who excused himself on the ground that he did not care to plagiarize from fact. I do not know whether Mr. Froude would have adopted that apology. But certain it is that, like a well-known school of ecclesiastical historians, with whose temper he had much in common, however alien from their beliefs, he preferred to have facts of his own making. Indeed, he