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Northwest Review.

TUESDAY, JULY 13 1897.

CURRENT COMMENT.

THE DELEGATE'S LETTER.

Ed, and more correct translation than any hitherto printed, of Mgr. Merry del Val's letter to His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface. It bears flattering testimony to His Excellency's reverent affection for the Canadian episcopate, and also to the impression produced on the Papal Delegate by the heartiness of his reception here and throughout Canada. The sentence in which he shows how intimately the authority of the Bishops is linked with that of the Pope deserves to be carefully pondered.

ITS PRACTICAL PURPOSE.

The duty Mgr. del Val inculcates is one which we have religiously performed ever since his arrival in Canada. We have abstained from all agitation— which as His Excellency pointed out when he said, in answer to the first Manitoban address, "il faut agir sans s'agiter," does not imply inaction: we have sunk our differences and our just cause for resentment; we have suspended all discussion, while of course recording facts and stating Catholic doctrine. Thus we are in a position to recommend that others should imitate us in obeying a command the provisions of which we have ourselves forestalled.

THAT INSPECTOR.

For instance, we venture to suggest that the authorities at Ottawa should respect the Delegate's behest so far at least as not to set up a new and useless agitation by sending to Manitoba that Catholic Inspector with whom they have been threatening us for some time past and whose advent is announced for this month. If he does come, he will find the doors of our schools closed against him. So long as we receive no government allowance, we will submit to no government inspection.

OAK LAKE SCHOOL.

The Tablet of June 12th prints a well written and interesting letter signed by Rev. Father Lemieux and Mr. Wm. John Manbey, of Oak Lake, Manitoba, asking assistance for a local convent school. The letter gives a graphic account of the situation of Catho-

lies among a bigoted Protestant majority. "Until a few days ago we had not a Catholic school of any description in our entire area. Now, however, we have established a school in an empty farm-house, about eight or nine miles from this village (Oak Lake), which is attended by about thirty children. The Liberals, desiring to crush our little venture, are making strenuous efforts to have the municipality establish a Protestant school (to be erected at the public expense) next door to our Catholic school. We have defeated them in the first engagement, but know too well that they will return to the charge at an early date. The fact that there are no children to go to the proposed Protestant school unless they can entice ours away, makes no difference to the Liberals, who say that, at any rate they will make the beggars (i. e. Catholics) pay taxes even if they will not use the school, and so render them less able to support the Catholic Voluntary school."

CATHOLIC DEMONSTRATIONS In England.

The English Catholic papers recently to hand contain most interesting accounts of a series of great demonstrations carried out during the month of May in various parts of the country, which speaks eloquently both of the zeal and fervor of our coreligionists in the mother land and also of the enormous strides which the Church is making there. The demonstrations to which we refer consisted of solemn outdoor processions through the streets of the metropolis and other large centres of population in honor of the Blessed Virgin, with all the ecclesiastical accompaniments of priests and acolytes, banners and crucifixes, music and singing, and with statues of Our Lady borne shoulder high. We read that vast numbers of men, women and children took part in these grand demonstrations of Catholic faith and devotion, the processions in some cases being miles long; that the districts through which the parades passed were gaily decorated with lines of flags thrown across the streets, bunting and evergreens, with altars erected in the windows of Catholic residences along the route and the fronts of these houses displaying mottoes appropriate to the month of Mary. The pavements, it is recorded, were thronged with respectable crowds of sightseers and in not one instance was a disrespectful word heard as the processions passed by, but on the contrary all seemed impressed with the religious solemnity of the processionists who now with their hymns, now with rosaries, now with litanies, kept up a continuous prayer to Almighty God for the conversion of England. Never before since the Reformation have there been such wonderful demonstrations of Catholic piety in the streets of the large cities of Protestant England, and when we read of the fair image of the Blessed Virgin being publicly carried through the thoroughfares of England's metropolis whence she has been banished for so many centuries, when we read of a multitude of voices singing the Litanies and sweet Ave's to Mary in those same streets, and when the press conveys to us accounts of such unparalleled enthusiasm and devotion to her as have recently been witnessed not only in London but also in the other great cities of the land, it really looks as if she were again taking possession of what was once her dowry. Truly "God does not die; men may think they have defeated Him and for a season their works may triumph, but He is never defeated. At "the reformation" it seemed as though the Catholic religion in England was dead. Its temples and sanctuaries were stolen and used for other worship than that for which they were raised, the Catholic faith no longer seemed to have any foothold in the land, its symbols were destroyed, it was proscribed with no-one to mention its name save in ridicule, and yet God was not dead. Again the Catholic religion lives in England, the second spring has come, the faith is once more alive in the land, and the processions of last month, the activity of the various societies and guilds, the open-air speaking which is regularly carried out in most of the large centres,—all these things show that truly the Catholics of England are men and women of the right stamp who in their zeal for the propagation of the faith are a credit to the church and an example which Catholics the world over may well strive to imitate.

Another item which shows the progress of the faith in England is the announcement that arrangements are being made at the suggestion of the Holy

Father for the institution of a department in the English College at Rome where clerical converts from Protestantism many have an opportunity of pursuing with the greatest profit and convenience to themselves a course of theology most appropriate to their peculiar requirements. It is found that while the ordinary routine of the College curriculum and the methods which are in vogue in most seminaries are adapted to those who have been lifelong Catholics, they are not, and cannot be adequately fitted for the intellectual complexion of minds which by patient study and serious investigation have moved through varying forms of uncertainty into a frame of settled conviction, for such minds, however clearly and firmly they may now comprehend the position of Catholic truth must nevertheless be for long after their conversion affected by the results of living for so many years in an atmosphere quite alien from the faith. The Holy Father, therefore, in his paternal solicitude for the welfare of the Church in England has now displayed his care and loving kindness in favor of that large and ever increasing number of men for whom the new department at the English college is intended, namely the Church of England clergymen who being converted to the faith are called to the priesthood of the Catholic Church.

And English Catholics have still another evidence lately of the great interest the Holy Father takes in the welfare of the Church there, for not only has he arranged for a special course of theological study to meet the needs of converted clergymen, but he has also initiated in the same college a curriculum of higher studies for the young ecclesiastics who are receiving instruction there. His Holiness with his wonderful foresight plainly sees the great problems that will be before the clergy of the future in Great Britain, and he knows that if they are to meet the demands that will be made upon them consequent upon the intellectual unrest which so strongly characterizes our modern world they will need to be armed with many weapons that were, no doubt, of minor importance in the past.

In this short sketch we see what the Church in England is doing now and what she doing to meet the requirements of the future. May God bless our noble coreligionists there and prosper them in all their efforts, and may He give them the consolation of seeing the rapid spread of that faith which was once England's greatest glory.

LETTER

Of His Excellency MGR. MERRY DEL VAL To His Grace

The Archb. of St Boniface

(Translation from the French.)

Ottawa, July 3rd 1897.

My Lord Archbishop, On the eve of my departure from Canada for the Eternal City, where I shall soon go to place in the august hands of His Holiness the result of my investigations and efforts, I wish to write to Your Grace as to the Bishop most immediately interested in the question that has been the principal object of my mission, and through your kindness I intend to address all the Catholics of the country.

In the first place, my Lord Archbishop, allow me to unite to the feelings of respect and devotedness which I most gladly offer to all the Archbishops and Bishops of the Dominion a sincere expression of gratitude for the kindness of which Their Lordships have given me signal proofs. My thanks are also due to all the members of the clergy and to the faithful of the different dioceses for the cordial and touching welcome they have everywhere given me. I regret that I am precluded from expressing to each one in particular what my heart feels so deeply.

I have also had reason to be very well pleased with the great courtesy of the civic authorities and I wish here to assure them of my gratitude and respect.

We must hope that the sacred work of peace and justice, desired by the Holy See and by us all will be fully realized. In this regard, I can assure Your Grace that His Holiness will be able before long to give a decision and to trace for the Catholics of Canada the line of conduct to follow in the present situation.

The Holy Father has exhausted all sources of information, and, unless wishing to shun the truth, it is impossible to doubt that he is perfectly informed of the facts and circumstances.

In the meantime, however, there remains an imperative duty for all, and in the exercise of my functions I am obliged to inculcate it in a formal way, with the certainty that the bishops and

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clergy will see to its exact fulfilment on the part of the faithful. This duty is to abstain entirely from all agitation, forget divisions and resentment, and suspend discussion.

Things having, for Catholics, entered a new phase by the simple fact of the direct intervention of the Sovereign Pontiff, it is for him to determine finally their obligations with respect to the religious side of the question, and it is not our business, nor the business of any one, to anticipate his judgment and action.

It must be evident to every enlightened Catholic that the authority of the supreme pastor cannot be invoked or sustained by encroaching on that of the bishops; and that, on the other hand, the authority of the bishops is weakened by impeding even indirectly, the free exercise, of the authority of the Head of the Church.

For my part, my Lord Archbishop, the promptness with which the Catholics of Canada won my esteem and admiration for their virtues does not allow me to entertain a doubt as to their rejoicing in being able to leave to the Vicar of Jesus Christ, with submission and confidence, the care of watching over their religious interests, deeply persuaded, as they are, that his decision will be the holiest and the wisest.

Your Grace will, I trust, kindly accept the assurance of my esteem and sincere attachment, and allow me to express my ardent desire of seeing this people of Manitoba, the object of your zeal, your labors and your prayers, prosper under the eye of God.

Your Grace's Most devoted servant in Our Lord, RACHAEL MERRY DEL VAL, Apostolic Delegate.

To His Grace The Most Reverend Adelard Langevin, Archbishop of St. Boniface (Man).

Mgr. Merry del Val.

United in Mind and Heart with the Canadian Episcopate.

From "La Presse," Montreal, July 2nd.

In his recent visit to St. Hyacinthe, Mgr. Merry del Val, in answer to the addresses presented to Him, gave utterance to words that are for a great number of the sympathizers with Manitoba Catholic Schools, a sure pledge that the Laurier-Greenway-Tarte settlement will be condemned by Rome. Here is the "Courier de St. Hyacinthe's" report of the Apostolic Delegate's words:

"His Excellency thanked the Mayor and Mgr. Decelles for their kind words and made a brilliant eulogy of the Canadian Episcopate. He said he was, as to his way of thinking, united, mind and heart, with the Canadian episcopate, whose merits and devotedness he had learnt to appreciate. In conclusion he said he carried away with him the best memories of Canada, and that he would often think of us, when he should have re-entered Rome, in the presence of His Holiness Leo XIII."

THE POPE AS A POET.

Speaking of the Pope's poem on frugality, the New York World says:

"A moment's examination of the Pope's verse will convince any competent critic that he is writing, not mechanically by rule, but easily and fluently by ear in a tongue almost, if not quite, as familiar to him as his native Tuscan. Many may think his Latin better than that of Erasmus or Voss. The only English poets whose Latin verse can be compared with his in harmony are Milton and Gray. It is probably within bounds to say that he surpasses Milton, and is surpassed only by Gray, the author of 'The Elegy in a Country Churchyard,' and perhaps the greatest classical scholar of modern times.

"The Pope is undoubtedly a poet. Were

it not beneath his dignity to write in a vulgar modern tongue, he might write Italian songs which would be sung wherever the language is spoken.

"The study of his style is well worth the pains of American Latinists, and the World hopes that some one of them will do him justice in English as simple, terse and melodious as is his genuinely Horatian Latin."

THE GLORY OF RAT PORTAGE.

Ex-Mayor Barnes Tells How The Town Got Its Name And Why Citizens Love It.

RAT PORTAGE, Ontario, June 17.—In the mining convention just held here, Prof. Goodwin of Kingston advised that the town change its name from Rat Portage to some one of the many musical Indian names so plentiful here. The audience plainly showed its disapproval of the idea.

Before the close of the session ex-Mayor George Barnes secured the floor. He is a tall, lank, bony fellow, droll and humorous to a high degree. He said that in times past movements had been started to change the name of the town, but for good reasons the people were so attached to it that they defeated all such movements. "I will tell you how the town got its name," said Barnes, and he kept his word.

"Long years, ages ago in fact, around Rat Portage there were numerous water bodies connected by narrow necks of rock. These bodies of water fairly swarmed with countless numbers of muskrats. When they passed from one lake to another they had to use these rocky necks as portages.

Now a muskrat has a long, rough, scaly tail, which drags behind. Year after year, and age after age, those rats dragged their tails over those portages until deep creases were worn in the hard rock. In time, water commenced to run through those creases and it kept running through until a deep broad channel was formed. In that way we secured the falls and what is now the Winnipeg River.

"The rats kept portaging, the paths kept deepening, and in time, there was lots of time in those days, our second water power was formed. The thing kept on until the third fall, the Dick and Banning site, was formed.

"But just then the white men came and caught almost all the rats and their great work came to a stop. If the white man had not come, undoubtedly other water powers around here would have been formed, and no one knows where the good work would have ended.

"Now that is how this place came to be called Rat Portage. One of our chief glories is our water power here, and that's why the people here love the name of their town."

Barnes then sat down, and the packed house with thunderous applause showed that it endorsed his statement of the case. — N. Y. Sun.

Buenos Ayres.

Those schoolbooks which yet set down Rio de Janeiro as the largest city in South America will have to be corrected. Another city, lying far to the southward, has gone ahead of it in our times—the rapidly growing city of Buenos Ayres, in the Argentine Republic. The population of that city is twice as great as it was twelve years ago; it is now 700,000. There are only four, or, we may say, three cities of larger population in the United States. Buenos Ayres has rushed forward, and that very steadily. A few years ago it began to gain upon Rio, which is now a good distance in the rear, perhaps one hundred thousand souls. The cause of the extraordinary growth of Buenos Ayres is immigration. One-half of its inhabitants are Europeans, the greater number of whom are Italians. The immigration of Italians into the city for a year past has been very great, much greater, we are informed, than into New York. The growth of the commerce, the industries, the wealth, and the prosperity of the city has been not less remarkable than that of its population. The schoolbooks must hereafter place Buenos Ayres first among the cities of South America.—N. Y. Sun.