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At St. Boniface, Man.

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**Northwest Review.**

TUESDAY, JULY, 4 1899

**CURRENT COMMENT**

Stovel's Pocket Directory for July is sharp on time. In most respects it is also quite up to date. But we cannot help remarking that, although the "Northwest Review" has the honor of figuring in the list of newspapers published here, "Le Manitoba," printed in the same office, is conspicuous by its absence. "L'Echo de Manitoba" appears in the list, but the old reliable paper does not. Then again St. Boniface College, the oldest and most successful of the University Colleges, is unaccountably absent from the list of schools and colleges, although St. Boniface Academy, which has been called Provencher Academy for many years and Sister Couture, who ceased to be its principal about four years ago, are both there. Of course not a word is said of the new convent in which all the girls of St. Boniface, about two hundred, are educated under Sister Hortense, of the order of Jesus and Mary. Father Messier is still set down as parish priest of the Cathedral, a post which he resigned almost two months ago in favor of the Very Rev. A. Dugas, V. G. In spite of our protest a couple of years ago no account is taken of the increased number of seats both in the Cathedral and St. Mary's church, nor of the five chapels in the Hospital, the Mother House, the Hospice Taché, the College, and the new Convent, the smallest of which has a larger average attendance than several Protestant churches in Winnipeg. We mention these omissions and blunders not in the hope of seeing them corrected—they will never be corrected unless we ourselves send in official information—but just as a specimen of how little the Protestant world knows about Catholic facts under its very nose.

St. Augustine says that the wicked are tolerated in this world by the Almighty either for the chastening of the good or with a view to their own ultimate conversion. Let us hope that the latter end will some day be realized by the bigoted Ger-

man minister whom Dr. Devine so fearlessly and ably pulverizes in his letter to the Free Press. But we are quite certain that the former end, the chastening and triumph of the good, has already been very fully attained by that same slanderer. His calumny has brought to light all the care that is taken in St. Boniface Hospital of even the most worthless and ungrateful patients. The unjustifiable snarling of this "little German band" has also provoked a very valuable letter from Mr. Andrew Mulligan. Both these letters will be found in another column.

In the July "Catholic World" Father Walworth continues his reminiscences of the religious crisis in England fifty years ago. This chapter is still more interesting than the first one. One feels what a wholesome influence Newman exercised over the life of this American convert, and how widespread was the sway of that master mind. E. C. Vansittart contributes a perfectly flawless gem of a domestic tale. None but a mother brought up in an atmosphere of refinement could have written so charmingly. Why is it that so few Americans can write in this way? They all seem stilted and unnatural or aiming at effect. Is it the result of an itching for publicity and show?

Miss Elder wrote for the June "Donahoe's Magazine" one of her atrabilious articles on the subject of the now famous poem "The Man with the Hoe." She complains that the Church neglects the husbandman, the ploughman, the tiller of the soil, that even priests shun the country and crowd into cities. This may be to a certain extent true in the States; but it is not at all true of our Canadian priests. "The Man with the Hoe" is, for such popular apostles of colonization as Fathers Lacasse, Lacombe, Morin and Blais, a real hero. We Canadians and especially we Manitobans realize to the full the value of manual labor in the glory of God's own sunshine or the bounteousness of his gentle rains. Each of our Catholic parishes is an anthem of praise to "The Man with the Hoe." But then, to be sure, our people are Catholics of the right sort. It would sweeten Miss Elder's temper if she dwelt for a time in a Catholic country.

**A CATHOLIC PARTY.**

At the St. Jean Baptiste celebration at St. Jean last Tuesday exception was taken to one of the speakers because he inveighed exclusively against the misdeeds of one of the two great political parties. Apart from the tactless blunder of introducing politics into a national festival, we have had occasion to hear many comments like the following. An influential working-man remarked upon that speech: "I was brought up a staunch Conservative; but of late my views have changed; what we Catholics here need is an independent Catholic party, free to praise or blame the virtues and vices of Liberal or Conservative, but united in all Catholic interests." This sentiment is growing among Manitoba Catholics,

and His Grace's recent pronouncement on the Oak Lake incident will undoubtedly increase the strength and scope of this eminently reasonable persuasion.

A third party would help greatly to a knowledge of the true facts in many disputed questions. As matters now stand it is almost impossible to get at such facts. Take, for instance, the recent Yukon charges made in the Ottawa House by Sir Hibbert Tupper. The ordinary, plain man does not know what to think of them. On the one hand, the Montreal Star finds them so striking and so poorly parried by the Government that it indignantly calls on Lord Minto to dismiss his ministers, since the Government majority has refused to order an official investigation into these charges. On the other hand, ministerial organs gloat over the Hon. Mr. Sifton's acrobatic feats in reply and foretell Sir Hibbert's death by his own boomerang. It is true that "three Liberal members, Mr. Oliver, Mr. Richardson and Mr. McInnes, all three representatives of western constituencies which are particularly interested in the honest administration of the Department of the Interior, voted against" the Liberal party on this question; but we know that there never has been much love lost between Mr Richardson and the Hon. Clifford Sifton, and the two others may have, for aught we know, their special axes to grind. At any rate they have no common ground that would authorize them to pose as a third, independent, impartial party, which could hold the balance between the two others and let daylight into the Cimmerian darkness of befuddled disputes.

This is precisely what a Catholic party could alone do. Its members might vote with either Conservatives or Liberals on non-religious questions; but they would give their solid vote for matters concerning Catholic interests. Hence the wisdom of His Grace's preference for Catholic candidates who run on the independent ticket.

**ST. BONIFACE HOSPITAL.**

**DR. DEVINE DEALS WITH THE COMPLAINT OF THE GERMAN PAPER.**

To the Editor of the Free Press.

Sir,—My attention has been drawn to a paragraph in the Free Press, which was copied, I have no doubt, in good faith, from the German weekly, Der Nordwesten, and but for the reprinting of which might have escaped the attention of the proper authorities. The paragraph in question is:

Der Nordwesten says: "As we are informed on reliable authority, there has been for some time in the hospital at St. Boniface a German who believes he is suffering from lung disease, and gives the impression that he is really a sick man. This German has now been lying for the last five weeks in the hospital, without having seen a doctor, although he has repeatedly asked for one."

"The man is poor and unable to pay; but for this reason the government pays for every day

that he, or others without means, spend in the hospital, to the hospital authorities; so that his inability to pay should not subject him to this treatment on the part of the doctor. As several complaints have been made about the treatment of this patient, and the St. Boniface hospital is an institution which is, for the most part, supported by the government, in other words the people, it would be in the interest of the public as well as of the hospital if the responsible officials would investigate this case and provide a remedy."

I called at the office of Der Nordwesten and demanded upon whose reliable authority the above statement was made, to be informed that the authority was the Rev. Mr. Beer, 369 Henry ave. I immediately proceeded to see the reverend gentleman, who denied having "written" the paragraph, but said rudely and bigotedly that he had no doubt of the truth of the statement; and further volunteered "that the sisters at St-Boniface refused to allow the patient in question to go to the general hospital."

Now, sir, the facts of the case are these. The patient in question is a Mr. Arndt, aged 24 years. He came under my care eight months ago at St. Boniface hospital. His only symptoms then were quickened respiration and pains in his chest; for months he was under my daily personal supervision, and Drs. Chown, England, Bell, Moody and Simpson, have all at different times given me the benefit of their advice and consultation. Finally an abscess appeared on the right side of his neck, and I advised an inspection.

He consented and I arranged every thing, only to find that his courage was insufficient, and he would get as far as the operating room, and then refuse. Twice he disappointed me, and then finally the abscess began to press upon his wind-pipe, and one day Drs. Chown and England being present, I opened the abscess, evacuated about a quart of pus and discovered, what we had all along feared and dreaded, that he was suffering from tuberculosis of the bodies of the vertebrae of the neck.

To-day that man is up and about. He is free from pain, and is gaining every day. He is, I think, what might be called a very good result, and Dr. Chown told me only to-day that he saw the patient and was astonished to see him up and walking about. So much for the history of the case.

There is, however, another charge made by the Rev. Mr. Beer, viz., that the sisters at St-Boniface refused to allow him to leave and go to the General hospital. During the six months he has been at St. Boniface, several times he was urged by me personally to leave the hospital and go elsewhere, because at the time I despaired of ever being able to do him any definite good, and he always declined; but there is another reason, and that is that he was a patient at the General hospital for some time, and was actually discharged therefrom as a chronic case, and one not suitable for a general hospital. His medical attendant there was Dr. Montgomery.

Now, sir, the Rev. Mr. Beer is a type of the individual who does a great deal of damage in this world, and after my conversation with him yesterday, I came to the conclusion that not only was he ignorant of even the main facts of the case, but that he was sheltering himself behind Der Nordwesten, and making that paper responsible for a malicious slander.

I am perfectly satisfied that Der Nordwesten is guiltless of

any malice in the matter, and has been made the victim of a wholly false set of facts, trumped up by the Rev. Mr. Beer to throw discredit upon the authorities at St. Boniface.

I am only sorry that the matter cannot be brought home to him more forcibly, but as no names have been mentioned by him, I can take no specific steps to make him responsible; but I do hope that he will be man enough to apologize and state that his sources of information were absolutely unreliable.

I am sorry to have to occupy so much valuable space, but the subject is a public one, has been copied into the Free Press, and needs public retraction.

JAMES DEVINE.

Winnipeg, June 30.

**ST. BONIFACE HOSPITAL.**

**ATTENTION CALLED TO THE COMPLAINT OF A GERMAN PATIENT.**

To the Editor of the Free Press.

Sir.—Having recently taken my discharge from the St Boniface hospital, where I have been a patient for some months, perhaps you will permit me to correct the statements made in your issue of this day, taken from the German paper, Der Nordwesten, reflecting upon the management of the hospital in question.

I am personally acquainted with one patient referred to. He and I were ward mates, and suffering from the same complaint—tuberculosis. His neck was operated on some months ago, by one of the surgeons, and I heard him say that he would not allow another operation to be performed.

To my knowledge the house doctor and visiting doctors have examined him; his disease is chronic, and there is no known remedy for its complete eradication. Everything that medical and surgical skill can do has been done for the man. The sisters treat all patients under their care with the greatest kindness and attention, regardless of creed or color. Last year 1,623 patients passed through their hands, and the percentage of deaths I understand, was three per cent.

The miserable pittance of 37½c. per day, allowed by the government for persons without means, is totally inadequate for their support, when it is borne in mind that in addition to food, medicine and laundry, clothing has in most cases to be provided. I have no hesitation in stating that were it not for the indefatigable industry and economy practiced by the sisters—who keep their own herd of cows, grow their own vegetables, and assist in working their place on the most economical grounds—that it would be impossible for them to run the institution.

I notice that your report is copied from a German paper called Der Nord-Western. I can assure your readers from personal knowledge that so far from the authority being reliable it is a most garbled and untruthful collection of malign inventions. The majority of patients admitted are poor and unable to pay and in addition, often without changes of clothing. I feel deeply grateful to our good sisters and the medical staff for their unvarying kindness and attention to me, and I have no hesitation in characterizing the letter of the Der Nord-western as a gross libel and slander on an institution that is doing an incalculable amount of good to those who are poor, sick and destitute. I shall conclude by asking you to insert this correction, to which as a token of good faith, I append my signature.

ANDREW MULLIGAN.

Winnipeg, June 29.