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Northwest Review.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1899

CURRENT COMMENT

The General Intention for De-
cember is "Christian Humility." Associates of the Apostleship of Prayer are asked to pray that the virtue of Christian humility may be more and more studied and practised among men. The heathen world had no conception of humility; "humilitas" in classical Latin meant lowness, baseness, meanness, but not humility. This last meaning was given to the word by ecclesiastical writers of the third and fourth centuries after Christ. The Protestant world repeats the Christian term "humility" parrot-fashion, but on the whole, it has no practical grasp of it. What it abhors in Catholics is precisely the humility that recognizes an infallible teaching Church, that believes in the Real Presence and all its practical consequences, that confesses its sins to a man in whom it recognizes the representative of God. Even Catholics who are much in Protestant society are apt, unless they pray against the baneful influence, to lose the bloom of humility. Père Lacordaire used to say that when he left a Catholic district to pass into a Protestant one he felt that he was crossing the frontiers of pride. Pride saps spiritual strength, humility fosters it. This may be a paradox, but it is borne out by the experience of all the saints.

Advent, which begins next Sunday, is a time of penance. Wednesdays and Fridays are days of fast and abstinence. It would therefore ill become Catholics to frequent theatres or other places of unnecessary amusement during these twenty-two days of preparation for the great and holy festival of Christmas.

The electoral campaign is in full blast. Now is the time for facts and figures to perform the most unnatural antics. The three Winnipeg dailies afford great amusement to the outsider. The Tribune is more or less independent, but is always eager to help the Telegram demolish the Free Press, while the old lady of Post Office lane keeps grinding out would-be witticisms and retracting ponderous jokes with a persistency and a courage worthy of the best cause

that ever enlisted the devotion of a hero.

In his lecture last Sunday on "Belief in Immortality among the Ancient Hebrews," Father Drummond laid special stress on the impliedness of that belief. One could not argue, he said, from the absence of explicit definition (which is a process foreign to the Oriental mind) to the absence of belief in the existence and spirituality of the soul. As a parallel instance, he pointed to most of the non-Catholic textbooks on Psychology. Psychology means a treatise on the soul. Surely there, if anywhere, one would expect to meet with a definition of the soul. Yet it was a fact, which anyone could verify, that these books said nothing of the nature of the soul, in some of them the word "soul" could not be found in the index. Does this prove that the authors of these books denied the existence of the soul? Not at all. It only proves that they had not the courage of their convictions, that they were afraid to face what is sometimes called "modern thought," and what is really the thinnest kind of superficiality.

A recent English convert relates that, some time before his conversion, his wife, who was always a Catholic, gave to her two boys, when they started to join the American army in Cuba and the Philippines, two scapulars, insisting that they should wear them always as Our Lady's badge of protection. "At the time," he adds, "I pooch-pooched the notion that a piece of cloth could do them any good; but now I think differently; my two boys have been through a score of battles without a scratch."

The pastor of B., a Minnesota parish, tells a similar story. When a detachment was recruited in his neighborhood for the Spanish war, he presented to each of the Catholic soldiers the little enamelled cross of the Apostleship of Prayer. No sooner had the Protestant volunteers seen it than they all applied to Father G. for one. He complied with their request, and now he notes, with deep gratitude to God, that every one of the B. volunteers, Catholics and Protestants, has returned home safe and sound. These two stories have never been published before; we can vouch for their correctness and can privately give names and addresses.

Mr. Joseph Bernier is to be congratulated on the good sense and disinterestedness he has shown by withdrawing from an electoral contest in which his presence would have brought on a triangular duel with the chances in favor of the least desirable candidate. Mr. Bernier's generosity is the more praiseworthy in that he was the choice of an overwhelming majority of the Conservative convention. On the other hand, Mr. Lauzon, having been chosen in the same manner by the same party at the previous election, in which he was remarkably successful, may be excused for adhering to that former popular verdict, which seems likely to be confirmed this time.

A Winnipeg daily recently

announced that Bishop Grandin would celebrate the 50th anniversary of his consecration on Nov. 30th. It ought to be "the 40th" as we announced several weeks ago. We hereby extend to His Lordship of St. Albert, the Senior Bishop of Canada, our congratulations and best wishes for many years yet. But the same paper is wrong when it calls him the oldest bishop on the American continent. Archbishop Elder, of Cincinnati, is older both in age and in date of consecration, and there may be many older bishops in Mexico, Central America and South America.

The same paper again chronicled the curious fact that F. Flamand (not Flement) of Provencher avenue, St. Boniface, who died suddenly last week at the age of 63, "had been in this country about 500 years (!) and could relate many interesting stories of his early experience." No wonder, with half a thousand years of experience. What is certain is that Mr. Flamand did his best to be here as long as possible, since he was born here.

The Free Press has taken its cue from us about the word "Britain." Not only has it dropped the un-English word from its headlines, but the other day it introduced an imaginary correspondent asking it if the press commits an error when using the word "English" instead of "British," in the following sentence: "The English troops routed the Boers?" Its reply is "No. 'England's might and England's right' is a perfectly proper expression to apply to the deeds and position of the United Kingdom or the empire." This is going farther than we do. We never objected to the word "British," because it is a recognized English word; but we do object to the word "Britain," because it is unmeaning and un-English when applied to the England of our day. England, Scotland and Wales are very properly called "Great Britain," but not "Britain" alone. This latter word is not to be found alone in the Standard Dictionary, which contains more words than any other completed English Dictionary. Dr. Murray's historical dictionary being yet far from completion. And we maintain that would-be English Scotchmen and Americans are responsible for this use of the word "Britain;" they hope thus to lessen the difference of origin between Englishmen and themselves, but no Englishman ever speaks of "Britain," except when he means his native island as it was 1400 years ago.

One of this morning's London despatches says: "To General Methuen, it appears, belongs the honor of the first real British victory of the present war, as Belmont was the first battle after which the British advanced instead of retreating." This is rather disheartening after the pæans about Elandslaagte. And the continuation of the same despatch shows that even Belmont did not demoralize the Boers, who quickly rallied with unabated courage.

Rev. Father Kavanagh, curé of St. François-Xavier, is in town.

THE STAR SHOWER.

This title has turned out a misnomer. Nowhere, so far as we can gather from telegrams or reports, has the expected shower of meteors materialized. Here a few people who watched on Thursday morning, 16th inst., saw eight or nine bright looking stars. In Montreal the McGill College astronomical staff saw 156 on Tuesday morning, 60 on Wednesday morning and 70 on Thursday morning. In England the cloudy weather made all observation impossible. In the United States a few hundred meteors were noted. On the continent of Europe in some places rather more were observed, but in no case has the total seen in five hours exceeded one thousand. Now this is nothing compared to the great displays of 1799, 1833 and 1866, when the entire sky was a network of meteors flying in every direction, in some cases several thousand being counted in one hour.

As it is not likely that the calculations of so many astronomers all over the world have gone wrong, there must have been some unexpected attraction of some other heavenly body to drag the group of meteors out of its ordinary path. Perhaps the really great display will occur next year, in the middle of November 1900, just as in America the last great shower of meteors was visible, not in 1866, but in 1867.

Curiously enough, people seem to forget that even later than the last mentioned date there occurred a meteoric shower of surpassing brilliancy and beauty, the display in this hemisphere being like a shower of little flames for three successive nights. This shower began in Nov. 27th 1872. Astronomers at that time suspected that these shooting stars were the result of the meeting of Biela's comet with the Earth.

Now, even Tempel's comet, which the eminent astronomer, Professor Falb, announced would meet our earth on the 13th of this month, has apparently failed to put in an appearance. It has not so much as given us a meteoric display of its own.

More than a week after the date of the promised shower, there comes from the Southern States a description of several brilliant meteors seen during the same night. The most curious feature about this sight was the comparatively long time during which these meteors were visible.

But, after all, considering the number of watchers all over the globe of ours, we may safely say that the largely advertised celestial fireworks have, for some as yet undiscovered reason, fizzled out.

Mr. John M. King, the well known Fort William merchant, was married yesterday morning in the Immaculate Conception Church by the pastor, Rev. A. A. Cherrier, to Miss Mary Van Bockstaele, lately arrived from Belgium. The happy couple returned east this afternoon.

That Hacking Cough is a warning not to be lightly treated. Pyny-Pectoral cures with absolute certainty all recent coughs and colds. Take it in time. Manufactured by the proprietors of Perry Davis' Pain-Killer.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

The one absorbing topic of public consideration and discussion just now is the Provincial election, and although the REVIEW finds nothing that interests it in party politics as at present manipulated, we feel that as unprejudiced onlookers, we see a good deal more of the true inwardness of the game than many of those see who are in the thick of the fight, and we are, therefore, in a peculiarly favorable position to size up public opinion and to discuss the probable outcome. We do not intend to say how we think men should vote on this occasion; we have taken a decided stand in more than one election in the past but that has been when some great question of vital importance to Catholics has been an issue, and we see nothing of the kind in this contest. We shall confine ourselves, therefore, to a consideration of the chances as they present themselves to us and would merely premise that we base our opinions on this point on information received from a variety of sources.

We first of all take the situation in Winnipeg, and here we think it must be evident to all observant citizens that the chances favor the opposition. They have undoubtedly exceptionally strong candidates and each one of them is fighting in the division where he is the strongest. It can hardly be denied that Hugh John Macdonald is the very strongest candidate the opposition could have in South Winnipeg. We believe he could win almost any constituency in Manitoba, and we consider that his election for the seat he is now contesting was assured the moment he accepted the nomination. His opponent, Hon. J. D. Cameron, is undoubtedly a popular man and has a host of friends, and under ordinary circumstances this would carry him through, but in the present instance he has not only to fight a man of at least equal personal popularity, he has also to contend against the strong feeling of disappointment which pervades the constituency in connection with the failure of the Government to secure the erection of a new hotel on the site which is now a ghastly heap of ruins and a blot on the appearance of the South end of the city. We do not say that Mr. Cameron is rightly blamed for this, but everyone knows that it is going to have a considerable effect on the election and it will lose him a great many votes that would otherwise have been cast in his favor.

Passing on to centre Winnipeg we come to a struggle which will be followed with interest throughout the length and breadth of the Province. This

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