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Northwest Review.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23 1897.

CURRENT COMMENT.

In an interview with the Winnipeg Tribune the Hon. J. D. Cameron says: "The decision of Rome, if correctly reported, is to be regretted. It seems remarkable, but the antagonism of the minority to the public schools system has apparently rather increased than diminished since the settlement, and will probably be still further increased by this decision." What a commentary this is on the settling effect of the much-lauded 'settlement'! These weighty words of the cabinet minister who has most interest in this matter ought to give the quietus to the dishonest politicians who have been shouting till they were hoarse that the Catholics of Manitoba were at bottom deeply in love with the public school system.

Lollius, the earnest Saturday contributor of the *Free Press*, devotes more than two columns of unlearned brevity to defending Mr. D. L. Moody against our depreciatory article. Lollius makes a very able and plausible defence. Only he completely misses the point, which was the difficulty of accounting for the success of so mediocre a man. "Mr. Moody," Lollius reminds us, "can scarcely tolerate the implied compliment with which men sometimes come to him to ask what is the secret of his success. 'Get out and go to work,' he says, 'and you will find how to succeed.'" But may not this very answer be part and parcel of his general self-advertising scheme? Nobody would dare to put such a question to a real self-denying missionary. After all, what proof have we, except his own testimony, that Mr. Moody does go to the funerals of the poor and weep with those who weep? Really Lollius must be very ignorant of what goes on every day in Winnipeg and everywhere else when he advises Catholics to go and do likewise, "leaving their criticisms until they have had something of Moody's experience." Why, most Catholic priests have more experience of poverty in a week than Moody has in a year. Vast numbers of the Catholic clergy not only visit the poor and the dying every day, but have made themselves poor to follow Christ, while Mr. Moody, far from bidding a dieu to wife and possessions, finds his chief glory in becoming a grandpapa and surrounding himself with creature-comforts in a luxurious home. Catholics give up their wealth and die in poverty for Christ's sake; Mr. Moody begins life in poverty and talks himself into opulence. Which is nearer to Christ who died naked on the cross?

Here is a gem from the Anglican *Church Record* of Vancouver for November:

Question by a correspondent: "The hiatus in the line on page 109 of the October issue of the *Record* preceding and following the word 'Churchman' is suggestive of the deletion of 'High.' Is that the case?"

Editor's reply: "Certainly not, there

are no "High" churchmen now. We are all Catholics."

Risum tenetis, amici! Should the Rev. H. G. Fenness-Clinton, editor of the *Church Record*, meet this correspondent alone under the giant pines that adorn Vancouver's outskirts, if both of them have any sense of humor, will they not be inclined to burst into uncontrollable laughter, as Cicero tells us the fence-straddlers and clerical humbugs of the olden time, the augurs, must have done?

Haste begotten of blind partisanship has betrayed *La Patrie* into a most amusing blunder. It speaks of Rev. Father Gontier, who is just now in Rome, defending the interests of Manitoba Catholics as "a Frenchman of that Dominican faction which is accused of intolerance in France. He knows neither the institutions nor the manners and customs, nor the aspirations of the Canadian people." Note that, with *La Patrie*, the word "Frenchman" is taken in its strict sense, as implying a man born in France. Now all well informed people in the province of Quebec know that Father Gontier is a thorough French Canadian, "un Canadien," born at St. Raphael in the county of Bellechasse, that he went through his classical studies in the Quebec seminary, where he afterwards became an eminent professor, and that, far from belonging to "that Dominican faction which is accused of intolerance," he has, since his entrance into the great Dominican order, spent his whole time in Canada and the United States. This astonishing blunder is very pointedly emphasized by *Le Courrier du Canada*, which adds that Canada is too proud of Father Gontier to hand him over to France at the suggestion of the unpatriotic *Patrie*.

The *Holy Cross Purple* for November maintains its high standard as a college magazine. It tells us, among many other items of interesting academic lore, that Bishop Healy, of Portland, Maine, is the oldest living graduate of Holy Cross, the only one left of the class '49. "Still active in God's service," this polished gentleman and gifted orator "is a true watchman on the tower." "A classic of the old school" is a well written essay on that prince of piquant jest and airy fancies, Charles Lamb. This article, though brief, touches concisely and comprehensively on all the phases of his style, character and life except his sad fondness for drink. But, surely, his cannot be called "a simple style." Mr. Gainer ought to have observed that he himself contradicts that epithet "simple," when he quotes Augustine Birrell remarking that to recite some of Lamb's sentences without stammering would be a delicate feat in elocution. Lamb's style is, quaintly and gracefully indeed, but most decidedly elaborate, shot through with originality and yet redolent of the fine sayings of the Elizabethan age, abounding both in deep thoughts and in the rarest felicities of language.

The *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* for this month opens with a striking article by the venerable Father Nicholas Walsh, S.J., of Milltown Park, Dublin. Under the heading, "The Aberdeen Romance," he examines the motive which must have actuated George Gordon, sixth Earl of Aberdeen, when at the age of twenty-five, two years after inheriting the title and estates of his father, he practically renounced all his worldly possessions and the society of his kith and kin, to become a sailor before the mast under the assumed name of George H. Osborne, and remained of his own free will in this humble station till he was washed overboard and drowned in a gale on the 21st of January 1870.

Father Walsh does not agree with those who, like Sir Bernard Burke, attribute this strange renunciation to a passion for the sea, a strong love for the lower orders of society and eccentricity. The sixth Earl of Aberdeen was five and twenty, therefore no mere thoughtless boy, when he adopted his seafaring life, and he kept it up for four years in spite of the hardships of which his letters show that he felt all the bitterness. So much for the enthusiasm theory. As to his supposed love for the masses, he could have indulged it in many ways at home with all the added charm of popularity and without any of the toil and privation of a sailor's life. In point of fact, however, he so little adopted the coarse manners and rough language of the forecastle that his fellow sailors knew he was not one of themselves, though his kind-heartedness made them esteem him. Finally, had he been naturally eccentric, he would have manifested this eccentricity in other ways. Now there is not in the rest of his life, nor even in the details

of his life before the mast the slightest trace of eccentricity.

No; it was no mere natural motive that prompted the brother of our present Governor General to leave home and his mother whom he dearly loved and wrote to from distant ports. After reading Father Walsh's calm presentment of the facts, one feels that he has, if anything, understated the reasons for believing that this whole-souled, humble, religious-minded Protestant wished to follow Christ's counsel, "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all thou hast and follow me," and not having the key to Christ's doctrine which the Catholic Church holds, he had to carve out his vocation for himself. If this theory be true—and it bears all the marks of truth—George Gordon was a greater hero than even his great namesake of Chinese and Khartoum fame. A curious fact mentioned by his companions is that on Sundays, when the captain failed to be present, he assembled all for religious service and used to read prayers out of an old Catholic prayer book.

The Rumored Decision.

The *Montreal Star*, of the 15th inst., published in large type the following cablegram purporting to state the chief points of the Holy Father's pronouncement, which was to be published on the 17th inst., but which in point of fact has not yet appeared.

The Pope declares that the Catholics must not attend the public schools; that they must, like Roman Catholics everywhere, loyally and obediently support their own school system, even where the State refuses to assist.

The Supreme Pontiff declares that no opportunity must be lost of asserting the claims of Roman Catholics to the full enjoyment of their constitutional rights.

Still His Holiness advises the Manitoba Catholics not to be too grasping and aggressive, but persuasively, and by all peaceful methods, to impress the justice and fairness of their temporarily lost cause upon their fellow citizens of other faiths in the hope that eventually their full rights may be restored.

Although no official intimation has been, as yet, received by His Grace of St. Boniface, we have two reasons for thinking that the foregoing summary is approximately correct: 1st, the well known accuracy of the *Star's* special cables, and 2nd, the character of the declarations contained in this summary. They are such as we heartily approve. The *STAR* seems to resent the Pope's interference; but, surely, this is a piece of unwarranted touchiness, as Leo XIII., on its own showing, does not make the slightest reference either to Protestants or to political views.

Some Nor'Wester Mistakes.

The Nor'Wester's recent article on "The Pope and the School Question" says that if His Holiness "should advise a continuation of the agitation for Separate Schools as they existed prior to 1890, it must be frankly said that the agitation will be futile. No political party in Manitoba will undertake the responsibility of re-establishing Separate Schools. There may have been differences of opinion as to the justice of the measures taken to abolish Separate Schools. But the abolition must now be accepted as a **FAIT ACCOMPLI**. It is as irrevocable as the execution of Charles I."

This theory of the irrevocable character of accomplished facts is, to say the least, as brutal as it is unprincipled. In the words of the late revered Monseigneur Tache, echoed by Monsignor Merry del Val, "no question can be said to be settled until it is settled right." Moreover, to compare an unconstitutional law which any honest government can repeal to an absolutely irrevocable step like the execution of Charles I. is sheer nonsense. Even constitutional laws are repealed every now and then. The experience of the champions of religious education in England proves that deluded majorities may ultimately be won over, and the surest way to win them over is to persist in calm, lawful

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REV. J. M. MCGUCKIN, O. M. I., Rector.

agitation. Truth and right are sure to prevail in the long run, and the Church is eternal.

Nor is it true, as the Nor'Wester asserts, that the Catholics of Canada showed they cared little for their Manitoba co-religionists when they elected Sir Wilfrid Laurier. On the contrary, those Catholics who voted for him were deceived by his fine and oft-repeated promises that he would secure to their Manitoba co-religionists a full restitution of their school rights. Had he given them beforehand a plain statement of what his so-called "settlement" would be, they certainly would not have placed him in power. They were tired of the procrastinating policy of the Conservative Government, they had been, they thought, deliberately duped for six long years, they did not even believe in the sincerity of a measure brought in at the fag end of a moribund Parliament, they had not yet had a full taste of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Protean capacities, and so they eagerly grasped at what seemed to them a fair and straightforward pledge. What they have done is, therefore, no proof that they do not care for Catholics schools. What they will do, when once they are thoroughly undeceived, remains to be seen.

Drifting.

A Scotch newspaper of recent date contains an account of a meeting of the Presbyterian Synod of Glasgow and Ayr held in the former city in October last. The report states that during the meeting Mr. James Macintyre, an Elder of the Church, submitted a resolution in which the somewhat surprising statement occurred that he had made a thorough search in all the bookstores of Glasgow for a copy of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which is one of the chief standards of the Church, but was unable to obtain one. He gave the Synod the further assurance that within the past year an ex-Moderator of the General Assembly had undertaken a like prospecting tour over the same ground but without being able to find one. It is just possible that neither the ex-Moderator nor the Elder, unless indeed they have a strain of the antiquarian in them, visited any of the various curiosity shops. But on this point the report is silent. To remedy this state of things which Mr. Macintyre characterized as "far wrong," he pressed upon the Synod to overture the General Assembly to take such steps as would make the Confession of Faith as easily obtainable as the Scriptures. The report informs us that this proposition was greeted with laughter in which the whole Synod excepting, presumably, Elder Macintyre who seems to have been thoroughly shocked by the levity evoked by his proposal, joined.

The incident related in the Scotch paper is not without interest. It indicates the passing away of much in the Presbyterian creed that since its origin until a generation or so ago was held in high repute by that body and to differ from which meant expulsion from the Presbyterian Church. The horrible doctrines taught by Calvin and for the non-acceptance of which he caused Servetus to be burned alive at the stake are now practically obsolete and the suggestion to make the Confession of Faith containing them as accessible as the Scriptures was, as we have seen, sufficiently ludicrous to provoke the laughter of the grave and reverend Synod. Burns in his *Thra Herds* indicates the true source whence the Presbyterians of his day derived their theology:—
"Frae Calvin's well-aye clear, they drank—
Oh sic a feast."

But the rigid Calvinistic theology so dear to the hearts of by-gone generations of Scotch Presbyterians is out of date and no longer digestible. Even in Glasgow, the hot-bed of Calvinism in past days, the very Confession of Faith is out of print and a copy cannot be had for love or money. The Glasgow booksellers may be trusted to know their business and would keep the Confession in stock if there was the slightest demand for it. And yet this antiquated and practically obsolete statement of belief is still the test of orthodoxy to which every Presbyterian minister is obliged to subscribe. He must assent to it with reservations as he does not believe in all it contains. For instance, what Presbyterian minister nowadays believes that God preordained any of his creatures to eternal damnation? Not one well informed man among them does. And note, in passing, the consistency of these gentlemen. Who is more ready than the average Presbyterian cleric to hurl charges of moral reservation against the Catholic clergy; and yet they themselves owe their very admission to the ministry to their willingness to solemnly subscribe their assent to a Confession of Faith in a great part of which they no longer pretend to believe.

The fact is, and is so plain that he who runs may read, that the Presbyterians, like all the other sects from Anglicanism down to what is perhaps the latest religious monstrosity—the "Homerites"—recently routed by the Winnipeg police, have broken away from their original moorings and are fast drifting they know not whither and apparently care not, only that it be not Romeward. Every member of each of the multiplicity of sects claiming for themselves the right of private interpretation of the Scriptures, and each in turn differing from the others in the meaning drawn from the Sacred Volume, they necessarily contain within themselves the fatal principles that must inevitably lead to doubt, division, disintegration and finally to unbelief. With Protestantism from the start it has always been a question of drift and it will be so till it ceases to exist. Speaking of Lutheranism the eminent non-Catholic writer, De Wette, very truly remarks that it resembles, in its separate churches and spiritual power, a worm cut up into the most minute portions, each of which continues to move as long as it retains power; but at last by degrees, loses at once the life and power of motion it retained. What is true of Lutheranism is equally true of Protestantism as a whole. Being of human origin it must inevitably submit to the law of change and decay and finally pass the way of all things that are "of the earth, earthy."

What The Bible Is Not.

Rev. Father Drummond preached last Sunday in the Immaculate Conception church, Winnipeg on "What the Bible is not." To an attentive audience, packed to the doors, he explained that the Bible was not (1) a book easy to find, since the majority of bibles were Protestant, therefore mutilated, deprived of seven books acknowledged as inspired by the Catholic church; (2) not internally one, since in origin (extending over 1500 years), subject-matter most various, and style most multifarious, it was really a collection of separate books, the only connecting link of which was external, viz., the oneness of the Divine Author; (3) not easy to understand, because written in languages that are dead and therefore imperfectly intelligible, the Hebrew especially being a language poor in words, without clear differentiation of meanings, without philosophical analysis, fond of metaphors and therefore vague, delighting in hyperbole and digressions, in a word, the very opposite of modern languages, and even in the Greek numberless difficulties of translation occurred; (4) not accessible to the masses of mankind: (a) before the invention of printing the majority of men were necessarily debarred from the art of reading, there-