

Northwest Review.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY
WEDNESDAY
WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY.
AT WINNIPEG, MANITOBA.

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

Subscription, in advance, ..\$1.00 a year.
Six months\$0.50

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WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 5, 1900.

CALENDAR FOR NEXT WEEK.

SEPTEMBER.

9. Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost. Feast of the Holy Name of Mary, and solemnity of the Nativity.
- 10, Monday. St. Nicolas of Tolentino, Conf.
- 11, Tuesday. St. Protus and companions, Martyrs.
- 12, Wednesday. Of the octave of the Nativity.
- 13, Thursday. Of the octave.
- 14, Friday. Exaltation of the Holy Cross.
- 15, Saturday. Octave of the Nativity.

CURRENT COMMENT.

We have given considerable prominence to the Blenk-Vallmer incident, because it shows that in certain cases affirmation, mere counter-affirmation, is the best answer to mendacious and unproved assertion. The burden of proof rests with the accuser, and so long as he does not advance any, it were folly to volunteer counter-proof. This is a very effective principle of controversy whenever, as in the instance so fully related in another column, one of the controversialists is a vulgar slanderer, devoid of all knowledge and intelligence. Later on, when the vigorous denial has checked the foolhardy onslaught it will be time to refute whatever evidence may be adduced in support of the bare-faced charge. It would be easy to prove, for example, that every one of the countries branded by Vallmer as utterly degraded is higher in the plane of civilization and virtue than any Protestant country in the world and that the superiority of the former is exactly proportionate to the fidelity with which each country, or each section of each country, practises the teachings of the Catholic Church. The absurd lengths to which Vallmer's inane bigotry drove him, may be gathered from his attributing "utter degradation" to France. This supposes stupendous ignorance. No doubt we cannot expect a fool like Vallmer to appreciate the generosity and nobility of the French character; to him the heroism of the French missionaries, whose name is legion, dying with and for their flocks in China would probably be but one more proof of "utter degradation." Nor can we expect him to realize the generally admitted fact that in the fine arts as well as in manufactures taste and finish are the distinctive glory of France. But, belonging as he does to that class of misbelievers who make material progress

the test of Christianity, he might be expected to know that France perfects the cruder inventions of other countries, has the fastest regular railway trains in the world, has in the Bank of France the most solid financial institution on the face of the earth, and holds within its borders the most uniformly prosperous nation now known to statisticians.

The Brandon Times twits the Midland Review with ignorance of the fact that the 24-hour system of reckoning time has been in use in Western Canada for fifteen years. But has it really passed into general use? The C.P.R. uses it in its time tables, the N.P.R. does not, and the common folk never think of inviting friends to dine at 18 o'clock.

Both the Brandon Times and the Midland Review do not seem to know that the system of reckoning each day from one to twenty-four o'clock, from midnight to midnight has been in constant use all over Italy for several generations, though our contemporaries are no doubt aware that astronomers have, for several centuries past, reckoned the hours from 1 to 24 from noon to noon; which shows that the proposal made by the Railway Time Conventions of the United States in April, 1883, to adopt the twenty-four hour system, was not a particularly striking novelty.

The news that the Victorian Nurses still exist in some out of the way places must be some consolation to the well-wishers of that order after the lamentable failure of their much-advertised mission in Dawson.

One is not surprised at the inaccuracy of that *enfant terrible* of Catholic journalism, Father Phelan, who, after being in Rome, writes the late Italian King's name "Humberto," but the same mistake occurs in papers that are, as a rule, carefully edited. There is no aspirate in the Italian name "Umberto." If people must have the aspirate let them write the name in English, "Humbert."

GOVERNMENT MAPS.

Mr. Frank Pedley, Superintendent of Immigration, Ottawa, has kindly sent us The Descriptive Atlas of Western Canada and Concise School Atlas of the Dominion of Canada, both issued by direction of Hon. Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior. Though the letterpress descriptive part of the former publication is concerned with Western Canada alone, there are good maps of each of the seven provinces, of the Northwest territories, of the World and of the Dominion with Newfoundland. The single-page maps measure 12 inches by 8 or 9 according to requirements; the two double-page maps (World and Canada) are, of course, double that size. The date of this pamphlet-atlas of 13 pages being 1900, the latest railway lines are given to their farthest limit. In the older provinces the multiplicity of names of places leaves no room for indications of topographical relief, such as appear in more thinly populated countries like Manitoba, the Territories and especially British Columbia, where the "sea of mountains" is very conspicuous. A casual observer would infer that there are no mountains or hills of any size in Ontario and Quebec. Perhaps this defect could be avoided by suppressing the names of places of secondary importance. However, the Department may have aimed rather at giving many name indications than at reproducing the natural features.

A marvel of condensation is the "Canadian Atlas for use in schools," or, as it is styled in the inside title, "Concise School Atlas of the Dominion of Canada." Folded once—which can be easily done, as linen cover and all, it is not one-eighth of an inch thick—it can be snugly stowed away in a waistcoat pocket, and yet its 32 pages, with 16 pages of description, 15 maps and 16 typical illustrations, give one a very complete idea of all the salient features and important statistics of our great Dominion. The difference between these maps and those of the larger atlas is that the former are only 6 by 5 inches and have not the marginal numbers and figures which, in the "Descriptive Atlas," are so useful for finding places. The article on British Columbia gives populations as follows: the whole province approximately, 200,000; Victoria, 25,000; Vancouver, 30,000; New Westminster, 8,000; Nanaimo and Nelson, each 6,000; Rossland, 8,000. These are the latest estimates, and, judging by the figures for Manitoba, they are probably above the reality; which is a mistake on the right or hopeful side. This matter of population is not handled according to one uniform principle: thus, in most cases the estimated population for 1899 is given, as for British Columbia mentioned above, for Winnipeg, credited with 50,000 inhabitants, an estimate which the city assessors have lately reduced by about 8,000, and for Toronto, whose population is put down at 186,517; but for Montreal and the chief cities of Quebec the figures of the Census of 1891 alone appear, and this makes the population of the metropolis of Canada about 100,000 less than it now is. Nor does this inconsistency spring from any religious or national prejudice, since the item "Religion" for Nova Scotia, reads: "Latest reports give total number of Roman Catholics in Province as 122,452; Presbyterians, 108,952; Baptists, 83,122; Church of England, 64,410; Methodists, 54,195;" thus giving prominence to the fact that Catholics are more numerous than any other religious body in Nova Scotia. In the paragraph on education in the province of Quebec it seems rather odd to state that "separate schools are maintained for Roman Catholics," and then to say, a few lines farther on, that, about 87 per cent of the entire population are adherents of that faith." This sounds like separating the head and body from the limbs. Of course the fact is that both Catholics and Protestants enjoy the inestimable benefit of managing their own schools separately and with more than equal justice for the latter.

Besides the maps of Canada as a whole and by provinces and territories, this School Atlas also contains maps of Europe, England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, Russia, Sweden, Norway and Denmark; but, in view of the fact that Mr. Sifton organized the populous immigration of Galicians, it is strange that he has forgotten to give these new settlers' children a map of Austria-Hungary, their fatherland. Our large and influential Icelandic population will likewise miss Iceland.

We have also received from the Department of the Interior a large and beautiful map of the Northwestern part of Canada from the 53rd to the 70th degree of latitude and from the 103rd to the 153rd degree of longitude. The scale, being about 35 miles to the inch, presents an interesting view of all that vast region comprizing the districts of Yukon and Mackenzie and the northern sections of British Columbia, Athabasca and Alberta. One of the most impressive features

of this fine map is the majestic Mackenzie River flowing from Great Slave Lake to the Arctic Ocean through the valley formed by the dwindling Rockies, which, as noted here and there, are often not visible from the river. Its delta, eighty miles long by from fifteen to thirty in width, is a network of islands. Great Bear Lake does not seem to have been carefully surveyed, its height above the sea not being given as it is for the other large lakes. If we may be allowed to suggest an improvement in so admirable a map, we are inclined to think that a statement of the superficial area in square miles of these great bodies of water would be a valuable help to the realizing of their magnitude.

The indefatigable Oblate missionaries have left the indelible impress of their Order in the names of Lakes Tache, Grandin, Mazenod and Fabre near the 64th parallel and south of Great Bear Lake. Their most northerly permanent mission seems to be at 67° 30', far beyond the arctic circle, while their important post at Fort Good Hope is only eighteen miles south of it. Fort Providence Mission, whither two Grey Nuns from St. Boniface went this summer, is some thirty miles below the outlet of Great Slave Lake and about 25 miles north of the 61st degree.

All the Yukon territory and the routes to Dawson are set forth in full detail, even the White Pass and Yukon Railway being indicated and a considerable portion of eastern Alaska thrown in. Dawson City appears to be about four or five miles north of the 64th degree and is consequently well within the temperate zone, albeit the general impression is quite otherwise.

On reviewing so splendid a specimen of the cartographer's art, one naturally regrets that government maps, and, for that matter, government reports and publications, in general, do not receive from the press and others to whom they come gratuitously, that degree of appreciation which they certainly deserve. Doubtless the officials who produce these documents are well paid, as every man who does good work ought to be; but, surely that is no reason why they should not get the praise their painstaking skill has richly earned; else it would follow that money making men of letters should be passed over in silence. Moreover, were attention duly called to these government publications, local experts would often be in a position to rectify mistakes or supply omissions due to inadvertence or involuntary bias, and in this way the greater accuracy and fairness of subsequent reports would be ensured.

VARIOUS FORMS OF GREETING.

Some of our exchanges manage their exchange department in a sadly slipshod way. We printed our paper during more than four years in St. Boniface, and yet, during all that time the N. Y. Freeman's Journal, the Catholic Standard and Times, of Philadelphia, the Michigan Catholic, of Detroit, and several others persisted in addressing their valuable papers to Winnipeg in spite of repeated printed protests on our part suggested by the complaints of the postal authorities. Will the editors of these papers now realize that we have moved back to the capital? Probably not, nor is it necessary they should, since the address is now correct. Others do realize the fact, some in rather curious ways. The Manitoba Daily Free Press, whose strong point is what Polonius calls "indirection," when reproducing without explicit comment our article of Aug. 22 on Father Cherrier's nomination to the

Advisory Board, simply says, as if we were a curious insect recently discovered: "The NORTHWEST REVIEW is a weekly publication issued in Winnipeg." The Pittsburg Observer, which, having come into existence during our sojourn in St. Boniface, could not and did not make any mistake about our then address, recognizes our new location by changing our address on its wrapper and by appropriating without acknowledgment and setting

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