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CURRENT COMMENT

Was it coincidence of a real proof of Foster's theory about the influence of the planets on the meteorological conditions of our earth? Or did he catch a glimpse of the European cablegrams just before sending off his own despatch. We cannot say; but what is undeniable is that on the front page of last Saturday's Free Press evening edition there appeared simultaneously Foster's weather forecast, dated April 29, containing these words, "Watch the storm and earthquake news from all parts of the earth April 29 to May 4," and European cablegrams, also dated April 29, announcing an eruption, with earthquakes, of Mount Stromboli, earthquakes at Geneva, in the Canton of Valais, and at Chomounix in Switzerland and at Lyons, Pontarlier and Gex in France. Later advices report that eighteen towns in France experienced earthquake shocks early in the morning of April 30. Such phenomena over so extended an area are very unusual in France. The shocks traversed the entire country north and south, but did not cause serious damage.

We read in last Monday's "Telegram" "Yesterday was Easter Sunday in the Greek Catholic churches of Winnipeg, and services of a special nature were held in the three Northend churches of this denomination." Bunching together in this way two insignificant schismatical chapels with one large Ruthenian church as "this denomination" may be excusable in a Protestant reporter who judges by popular names, but is decidedly misleading. It is true that both Uniates and Schismatics often describe themselves to the uninitiated as "Greek Catholics;" but Catholics, pure and simple, should be reminded that there is in this city only one "Greek Catholic" church in communion with Rome, and that is the Ruthenian church of St. Nicholas, which is already far too small, in spite of its imposing size, for the worshippers who throng it, while the two other "imitation shops" have only a corporal's guard. One of these is the so-called "Bishop" Seraphim's chapel, where the poor fellow got into trouble again last Sunday and had a loud and hot public argument with a socialist, until the disturbance was quelled by the police. The other chapel is run by one of those ignorant chaps whom Seraphim "ordained" without being a bishop himself, and who has since set up an independent meeting house of his own.

Commenting on the fact, observed by Mr. Raymond Robbins, of the Northwest University Social settlement, Chicago, during four years familiarity with the slums of that city, that the vast majority of the tramps are not foreigners, but native Americans, in some cases members of "Our best American families," the Sacred Heart Review says: "What is the matter with the American boy? With all the advantages he possesses there is serious question in his stamina. Has our secularized—and sentimentalized—system of education nothing to do with this, we wonder?"

In the April "Fortnightly," in No. 4 of the series entitled "Time's Abstract and Brief Chronicle," Mr. G. K. Chesterton, a recent Orange attack upon Sir Antony MacDonnell, puts into the mouth of "The Colonel," one of his characters, the following words: "I am against Home Rule on Imperial grounds, and I say so quite frankly. Ideally, I daresay, it would be the best thing that Ireland should govern Ireland. I do not believe that Ireland can govern Ireland. But if Ireland cannot govern Ireland, there can be no doubt, I think, about the next best thing. The next best thing is that England should govern Ireland. But that Ulster should govern Ireland, that an unpopular and embittered fragment of Ireland should govern Ireland, that is certainly the worst of all possible solutions. It is better that a man should be locked up as a lunatic, and

taken charge of by somebody else, than that he should be under the entire and independent domination of his own left leg. . . . The system by which the Orangemen govern Ireland has, in fact, every conceivable disadvantage that there could be. And the Orangemen do govern Ireland."

A friend writes from Montreal, that the local newspaper reports of Mr. Bourassa's speech on the school question at the Monument National, on the 17th of April, were incomplete, flat and inclined rather to belittle the orator, and thus gave no adequate idea of his splendid discourse. But the audience hung on his words for two hours and would have eagerly welcomed two more hours to a plea which they declared to be magnificent and soul-stirring. They hailed him as a second Demosthenes with Christian convictions to boot. Mr. Bourassa, it seems, is persuaded that the autonomy clauses will pass in their first, unamended form. We hope his forecast may be verified in the committee stages of the bill.

It is but fair to remember that, although Mr. Borden, the leader of the Opposition, opposed the school clauses on the mistaken principle that the educational question should be left entirely to the control of the new provinces, yet he distinctly dissociated himself from the horde of anti-Catholic bigots. He said that no one appreciated more than he did the moral and ethical training which the Catholic Church bestows upon the youth of Canada who are born within the pale of that church. "I esteem," he said, "to the highest, the value of moral training of the children of this country, and I am free further to confess that I appreciate more highly perhaps than some others do the consistency and devotion of Roman Catholics in this and in other matters of faith whenever they give to the Protestants of Canada an example from which the latter might well learn many valuable lessons."

"Tell it not in Gath; publish it not in the streets of Askelon;" but it is none the less clear that the speeches of Catholic members in the House of Commons at Ottawa have contributed largely to open the eyes of all their adversaries who are not wilfully blind. Thereafter the Ottawa "Free Press" says: "The strongest argument we have yet seen in favor of separate schools is to be found in the speeches of the French members of the House. It is a disgrace for the English-speaking members to see that the French adherents of Sir Wilfrid and Mr. Borden excel them in a discussion carried on in English. The speeches of Sir Wilfrid, of Messrs. Monk, Bourassa and Lemieux, attest a culture that is lacking in the harangues of the English-speaking members. . . . that is an effect of separate schools, the more we shall have of them, the better." La Presse, of Montreal, while gladly welcoming this graceful tribute, reminds its readers that the performance of these members is all the more noteworthy in that it is extremely difficult to handle, in a language acquired after childhood, a question which is already beset with difficulties. True, but that is precisely where the superior training of the French-speaking members gives them the advantage, in spite of the unfamiliarity of the language. Mere words produce little impression on an intelligent audience. It is thoughts and arguments that tell, and their telling effect depends upon their arrangement. Now the entire system of Catholic education, receiving, as it does, its initial inspiration from trained thinkers and theologians, is permeated by fixed principles of logic and literary composition. The consequence is that every Catholic student who has completed his classical course knows how to write an effective speech. He may not be able to do it, through lack of natural ability, but at least he knows how, and this knowledge is the most complete test of a good education, for it implies a well formed judgment and the power of adapting means to an end. On the other hand, most of the non-Catholic high schools, colleges and universities impart no fixed principles, no comprehensive views, no mental perspective as to the relative value

of ideas and arguments, nothing but a mass of disjointed erudition and unrelated special studies.

All good Catholics welcome the month dedicated to Mary, our Mother. The General Intention for May is the spread of sodalities in honor of the Blessed Virgin; they are the most potent instruments for the exercise of lay activity in the service of God.

The cable described Easter celebrations last Sunday all over Russia. The same date was observed as Easter here among the Catholics of the Greek rite. How comes it that, the moon which regulates Easter, being the same for all nations, the Greeks find themselves one week late? Surely they, too, must observe the rule laid down by the Council of Nicaea, that Easter falls on the Sunday immediately after the full moon which occurs on or next after the vernal equinox (March 21). True; the Russians and Greeks, who still cling to the Julian Calendar or "Old Style," are now fourteen days behind the Gregorian Calendar, so that what for us last Sunday was April 30, for them was April 16; but this difference of fourteen days is not enough to disturb the Easter full moon which this year occurred on April 19, that is to say, as far away as possible from the vernal equinox. There must, therefore, be some other solution of the problem. We think that solution may be found in the difference between the calendar moon and the astronomical moon. The latter is full at a given second, minute and hour. As the precise moment of its fullness varies with different longitudes, if the astronomical moon were to regulate Easter the date of that great festival might vary in different countries. Thus, this very year in America the moon was full on March 20 at 11.48 p.m. (Washington time), and consequently missed being the equinoctial full moon by 12 seconds. Therefore we had to wait for the Sunday after the next full moon, and as the next full moon fell on Wednesday April 19, we celebrated Easter on the following Sunday. But in Europe, our March 20, 11.48 p.m. was March 21, 4.56 a.m. (Greenwich time) and therefore the moon was equinoctial for them, so that they might have celebrated Easter on the following Sunday, March 26. But they did not, because the ecclesiastical calendar for 1905 makes the moon full on March 20, and again on April 18, not at any particular hour of these days but on these days in general and wheresoever these dates occur. The fact is, that to avoid different dates in different parts of the world, the calendar or ecclesiastical moon is an ideal or artificial moon, taking no account of any difference of time less than 24 hours. In other words the ecclesiastical calendar is only nominally dependent on the moon in the heavens; the true moon and the calendar moon may differ as much as three days. We have seen that they differ one day this year, since the Paschal full moon occurred on April 18, whereas the astronomical full moon occurred here on April 19 at 8.38 a.m. Now the possible difference of three days is stretched to four days in the case of the Julian calendar still followed by the Greeks, for this calendar made 1900 a leap year, which it is not with us; and as the Greeks have computed their Paschal full moons on a wrong basis for over a thousand years, it may very well be that their ecclesiastical calendar, instead of placing the full moon of April one day before its real date, as ours does, may place it four days after and, in this hypothesis, the Paschal full moon would have fallen on April 23, Sunday, and then the Sunday following viz., April 30, would necessarily be the Greek Easter. If any well informed Russian or Greek can offer a better solution we are willing to insert it.

The following well merited strictures on one of the text-books authorized for the public schools of this province are taken from a long and able letter, written by a former Manitoba public school teacher which appeared in the Montreal "Star" of April 17.

"I have in my possession 'The Programme of Studies and List of Text-Books authorized for use in the Public Schools of Manitoba,' revised till July

30, 1902, which list I am prepared to furnish to the editor of the Star for examination if anyone expresses the desire that I do so.

Among the books mentioned in this list is found Buckley's History of England. I am prepared to leave a copy of this work also with the editor of the Star upon request.

"To facilitate the work of those who wish to consult this author I shall immediately give the page and quotation from this book which is forced by the Government of Manitoba upon the Catholic children of that province and add that by 53 Vic. ch. 38, sec. 143, any teacher who substitutes another author for this one renders himself liable to a fine of ten dollars which may be imposed upon him by a police magistrate or a justice of the peace.

The following quotations will be found in Buckley's History of England at the pages indicated.

Page 123—"Under Cromwell and Cranmer a series of articles of religion were drawn up, the worship of images and relics was forbidden, etc."

"One word: There is not a Catholic under the sun that does not repudiate the accusation of worshipping images, relics, the saints and everything else that we are falsely, persistently and maliciously accused of worshipping and yet here is a book forced into the hands of young Catholic children from the pages of which they are by the will of the Government of Manitoba, imposed under penalty of a fine, obliged to learn and consequently believe that their church teaches doctrines which she abhors. A system of schools, national, godless or public, call them what you will, such a book authorized for use in them is not fit reading matter for a Catholic child. This is proselytism.

"P. 133.—Under the heading 'Persecution of Protestants' is told the story of the burning of Latimer and Ridley in Mary's reign. Latimer is quoted as having said: 'Play the man, Master Ridley, we shall this day light such a candle in England as, by the grace of God, shall never be put out.' I do not so much object to the quotation itself as to the comments of the author that immediately follow, among which we find: 'The burning of these men . . .

did light the candle of truth and courage amid the deep gloom of persecution.' I have been told that the use of the word truth here does not apply to protestantism. This I do not admit, for I maintain that by this statement the author distinctly calls protestantism the candle of truth and thereby catholicity the reverse of truth. But even admitting, for argument's sake, my interpretation to be erroneous, is there a fair-minded reader who will not agree with me when I say that not one of all the children who read that paragraph will interpret it otherwise than I have, and that it is only a man who wishes to quibble upon words that will twist it into any other meaning.

"And this is a book to place in the hands of Catholic children! Such books are chosen by Manitoba and very probably will be by the North-West for no other object than that of sowing in the souls of Catholic children distrust of their pastors and contempt for their religion. 'Tis proselytism and nothing else, for public schools are not altogether godless schools; they are an extension of the Protestant churches.

"By comparing pages 133 and 142, we can observe the fairness of this author. In Mary's reign (p. 133), the Protestants who were put to death died for their religion, while in Elizabeth's the Catholics were put to death as rebels. I leave my readers to imagine the effect of such studies upon poor, young, unsuspecting children seeking with avidity the bread of knowledge and truth and receiving the stone of misrepresentation and falsehood. I would prefer seeing in the hands of a Catholic child 'The Book of Common Prayer,' for parents could then place them on their guard, but with a book like Buckley's History he imbibes the poison of suspicion and error unsuspectingly, and, before he knows it, has gone too far—he is lost to the Catholic church. Page 144, under the title 'Seminary Priests,' we are told the story of a Catholic mission to England in 1584, and as a fruit of this mission what have we? A plot to

murder the Queen, leaving us under the impression that these priests incited the faithful to murder. And 'tis from such a book as this that Catholic children learn respect for their pastors and the doctrines of their church? Proselytism again!

Now, sir, I have said enough, I believe and with these quotations I close. But will the Rev. Mr. Scott persist in saying that Catholic parents should continue sending their children to schools where such books as this are authorized and imposed under penalty of a fine? Will he persist in claiming that we should not object to the breaking up of the separate school system? Will he still maintain that a system of national schools should be established when we have here a sample of the books from which the Catholic children would learn to despise their clergy and abhor the religion of their fathers? Will he say that the obligatory study on the part of Catholic children of such a book as this is a sample of justice for all? If this is a sample of the book intended to create a united national sentiment, then I say his object will never be accomplished by such means. I for one would want none of it, and would prefer to remain as I am.

A LOYAL CANADIAN.

Quebec, April 9, 1905.

The Telegram's Ottawa correspondent gloats over the fact that Mr. Claude Macdonnell, member for South Toronto, was probably the only Catholic that supported Mr. Borden's amendment against separate schools in the northwest provinces. It appears that Mr. Macdonnell, in his speech, attempted to refute the assertion that Toronto was the home of bigotry and intolerance by stating that he was elected by a constituency containing 10,000 voters, out of whom 8,000 were Protestants. His position in this debate accounts for his popularity among the Protestant electors. A man who would deliberately refuse to help secure for his coreligionists that very small measure of justice which the Autonomy school clauses strive to maintain cannot be much of a Catholic, except in name, and that sort of a Catholic is sure to be very popular with Protestants, because he is practically one of themselves, while masquerading on the other side.

Clerical News

Archbishop Orth, of Victoria, B.C., left on April 28 for Rome on a visit to the Holy Father.

The Holy Father has addressed an Encyclical to all members of the Catholic Hierarchy in the world, on the manner of teaching Christian doctrine. The Encyclical sets forth rules for the instruction of children in the Catechism, and directs the Bishops to see that the priests apply these rules in teaching the young.

During the Bonmartini murder trial at Turin a discussion arose with reference to the examination of Cardinal Svampa, the point at issue being whether the Cardinal had a right to invoke his privilege as a high officer of State as a ground for not attending in court to give evidence. The judges finally made an order empowering a Commission to interrogate the Cardinal.

The Roman correspondent of the "Daily Chronicle" is quite right in saying that the elevation of Abbot Gasquet, O.S.B., to the Cardinalate would be highly appreciated in the English-speaking world.

The Most Rev. Dr. Mangan, Bishop of Kerry, and the clergy of his diocese decided on the anniversary of the death of Dr. Coffey, the late bishop of that See, to raise a public memorial to him.

The Rt. Rev. Mgr. John S. Vaughan, Domestic Prelate of the Pope, and Canon of Westminster, is taking a step in Easter week that will surprise many of those to whom he is a familiar figure