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Current Comment

The Winnipeg Street Car strike was happily settled last Saturday, and the cars began to run regularly at 4 o'clock that afternoon. The strikers have obtained a substantial increase in wages and the principle of preference for seniority is recognized. Although the union has not been officially recognized by the company, a sort of implicit recognition is contained in that clause of the agreement which reads: "Neither the company nor its men will discriminate against or interfere with any employees by reason of their being or not being members of any street railway employees' union." Thus, while both parties have maintained the principles with which they started, material concessions have been made on both sides and what is believed to be a satisfactory conclusion has been reached.

Undoubtedly great credit for this successful settlement of a most serious difficulty is due to Rev. Doctors Patrick and Sparling, who, as representatives of the ministerial association of this city, had many conferences with the strikers, and were loudly cheered by the men as they left the hall after announcing the agreement.

When, a little after 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 7, the first cars manned by the well known men and running with that ease which betokened long practice and familiarity with surroundings, reached the corner of Main street and Portage avenue, a cheer of welcome greeted them. People were no longer afraid to climb in and they did so with a rush. That evening was a period of general rejoicing in our city after the weary walking of the past ten days.

Most of our fellow citizens sympathized with the strikers and showed their sympathy, when they could, by avoiding the use of such car service as there was during the ten days. And the strikers were not slow to appreciate any such practical expression of sympathy. One well known priest of portly presence and somewhat halting gait, laden with two heavy travelling bags, was painfully wending his weary way to the C.P.R. station, when an unknown man, touching his hat with unusual cordiality, accosted him with "Thank you, Father." The good priest felt that he hardly deserved any thanks, as his only reason for walking was that, after waiting twenty minutes in vain for a street car, he had to catch his train and could not afford a cab.

The two Passionist Fathers, who preached with such solid spiritual success in St. Mary's Church during the past three weeks, have made hosts of friends and admirers in Winnipeg. The regret which they so sincerely expressed, at the end of their threefold Mission last Sunday, is shared by their hearers. They had learned to like us and we had learned to like and trust them. So it is hard for us to part. Happily we are not like the "ships that pass in the night" and never meet again. It is one of the comforts of our firm Christian hope that we shall meet Father Richard Barrett and Father Gregory O'Brien in our everlasting and true home, where there will be no Question Box and no salutary but painful searchings of heart, such as missionary sermons must provoke in this vale of tears. Father Gregory has a splendid presence, the charm of persuasive yet mature youth, and a very fine voice. He excels in the hortatory style. He appeals to impassioned reason. Father Richard is the born reasoner, the clear expounder of doctrine. He exposes a fallacy with all the zest of a shrewd lawyer cross-questioning a witness. They work together as a perfect team, one supplementing and completing the other.

Their method of procedure is both interesting and effective. The sermons of the missions to Catholics (one week for the women, another for the men), although primarily based on strong arguments and never sensational, in-

variably ended by a prayer at the foot of the crucifix, addressed to the Crucified Lord. As the preacher spoke from a platform erected close to the communion rail, he ended his discourse by kneeling while he clasped the cross and raised his eyes to the crucifix. As soon as he knelt the large crowd immediately did the same and joined inwardly in the fervent and well worded prayer, which always summed up the chief purpose of the sermon.

The lectures to non-Catholics each evening of last week were attended by a large and respectful gathering of our separated brethren with merely a sprinkling of Catholics. The crowd was so great that extra seats had to be placed in the sanctuary, and these were soon filled. When Father Barrett gave the lecture, Father O'Brien answered the questions put in the question box the previous day. At eight o'clock he entered the sanctuary, genuflected before the Blessed Sacrament stepped upon the platform, and immediately said "Kindly stand up." The audience rose and he announced "that beautiful hymn familiar to all Christians, 'Nearer, my God, to Thee,'" which the priest, supported by the organ and the choir, intoned. It was heartily sung by the whole congregation. After the first verse had been sung, the priest then read that Catholic verse which brings in the Sacred Heart, and the congregation joined in the singing, though they could hardly have had time to seize all the words sung by the priest and the choir.

The answers to the written questions were given without any attempt to belittle the questions and were generally satisfactory to well informed persons, but perhaps rather too short for the uninformed masses of non-Catholics. One of these very brief answers, however, was so pithy and comprehensive that we repeat it here. Somebody had written, "Why does the Catholic Church forbid its members to join the Freemasons and the Odd Fellows?" Father Gregory replied: "Because any society that will not reveal its secrets to the highest civil or ecclesiastical authority is a menace to that civil or ecclesiastical authority." This, by going to the root of the matter, by giving the ultimate philosophical reason, implicitly and very strongly justifies the action of the Church. Strictly secret societies, whose secrets must not be revealed to any one but an adept, are truly a standing menace to human liberty and the well understood equality of rights.

One question, no doubt proposed by a Seventh-day Adventist or Baptist, quoted at considerable length a sermon by an American Catholic priest, showing that the whole Protestant world bowed down before the Catholic Church and accepted from her alone, the change from the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week, to the Sunday on the first day of the week. The questioner, after making out his case with great thoroughness asked if this was correct. Of course, he was told that he was quite right and that the only consistent adherents of the Protestant Rule of Faith, "The Bible and nothing but the Bible," were the Seventh-day people and the Jews. Curiously enough, observance of the Catholic Sunday is one of the few points on which the vast majority of non-Catholics agree, and one which they make more of than any other Christian observance, having even exaggerated in some ways the strictness of the Jewish Sabbath.

The following editorial note from "The Casket" of March 29 confirms what we have already said, that the much talked-of rupture between the English-speaking lodges and the French lodges, because the latter excluded all mention of God, is largely a piece of pharisaical piety, calculated to deceive the unwary.

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UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS OF PASSIONIST MISSIONS

Masses of People Throng St. Mary's At Non-Catholic Lectures. Large Class under Instruction

The non-Catholic mission at St. Mary's was closed on Sunday evening with an attendance that stands unequalled in the history of the senior Catholic church of the city. It was a climax to be expected after a week of such preaching of Catholicism. From within and outside the Fold, there had been aroused an unexampled tension of interest. Yet it was a climax that no one dared to look for. Nave and transepts, galleries and aisles, choir-loft, sanctuary, chapel and entrances were, in the exact sense, packed with people, and others came to find not a square foot of standing room. It was a sight to move the most lukewarm Catholic; the scene explained the quaver in the voice of the Archbishop as he invoked the parting blessing of the Universal Father upon the bended head of Catholic and non-Catholic, kneeling together.

The non-Catholic mission eclipses the preceding fortnight of services for Catholics, but with no disparagement to the latter. The splendid attendance every evening and the lucid and powerful lectures on the cardinal points of the Church warmed the hearts of Catholics to their religion more ardently than ever. But this large usefulness of the final week was only incidental. The influence for good upon our non-Catholic brethren in removing prejudice and, further, in effecting converts, can be guessed at only by signs. Upwards of 700 non-Catholics were sufficiently interested to secure volumes explanatory of Catholicism which were distributed by the missionaries; these several hundred souls have now in their possession books wherein they will find explained by able writers every fundamental point upon which they or their circle of acquaintances may hold prejudices, misconceptions or doubts, or which they may hear attacked falsely or with bigotry. Others have taken more steps; before the mission had closed a class of more than 30 non-Catholic men and women were undergoing instruction at St. Mary's presbytery. Others have been led altogether out of the "encircling gloom," the Fathers, before their departure on Monday having found five souls sufficiently clear in the faith to receive Baptism. The converts are from the Presbyterian, Methodist and Anglican churches.

The Passionist Fathers, Rev. Richard Barrett, C.P., and Rev. Gregory O'Brien C.P., fulfilled their mission to Winnipeg. Their three weeks of preaching has left a lasting impression upon the Catholic body. It has quickened the religious life and freshened the impulse of the parish and the community at large to a degree that we will never be able to fully appreciate.

The reports of the several lectures of the last week appearing in the local papers were very complete and we append only the very excellent report appearing in the Free Press on Monday, giving a summary of Sunday's Lectures.

FATHER BARRETT ENDS HIS MISSION

A Powerful Appeal Sunday Evening—Is One Church as Good as Another?

The mission to non-Catholics which has been in progress at St. Mary's church throughout the past week was brought to a close yesterday with three really remarkable demonstrations of the intense interest which this event has excited in the city. At the morning service at 11 o'clock the church was thronged to the doors, a very large proportion of those present being non-Catholics, and at the afternoon and evening services the attendance was simply overwhelming, every corner of the building being occupied and notwithstanding that an overflow crowd was accommodated in the sacristy, where they could hear the lectures but could not see the lecturer; hundreds who desired to attend could not even find standing room.

Even on Saturday evening the church was filled, and those present were privileged to hear a most eloquent and

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Persons and Facts

There are at least 55,000 and 60,000 Italians in Chicago, two-thirds of whom were born in Italy. There are nine Italian parishes; only one of those (Assumption Church on Illinois street) has its own school frequented by 850 children.

The Indian Appropriation Bill passed the lower house of Congress on March 8th. The amendment, affecting the rations for Indian children in Catholic mission schools was read, discussed and retained in the bill, in spite of a point of order raised against it by Mr. Stephens, democrat, of Texas, who on this occasion introduced a number of documents which were simply a repetition of the falsehoods that were published last winter during the Bard controversy.

Bishop Blank, of Porto Rico, will be installed Archbishop of New Orleans in May. The people of Porto Rico received this news with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow. They are glad that the deserving prelate has been promoted to the important See of New Orleans as a fit recognition of his eminent intelligence and virtues, and they are sorry because Bishop Blank will leave the Island plunged in grief at his departure, for, during the six years that he has been the spiritual head of the Church in Porto Rico, he has shown the most noble traits of character, consummate tact and good judgment in all emergencies, and has been an ideal Bishop.

Ground was broken last week for a splendid new charitable institution at Los Angeles, a home for the Little Sisters of the Poor. It will cost \$300,000 and will be the most convenient and modern throughout the world.

A tablet will be erected at last to perpetuate the memory of Major General John Sullivan, the hero of the Battle of Rhode Island. For many years the Irishmen of Rhode Island have demanded that the legislature take this action. The American Irish Historical Society have been persistent in their demands and the House Commissioners have eventually yielded to their repeated requests.

One of the best known Catholic laymen in the United States died last week in the person of Warren F. Mosher, secretary of the Catholic Summer School of America. Mr. Mosher's death took place at his residence, New Rochelle, N. Y. Mr. Mosher established the "Catholic Reading Circle Review" (now called "Mosher's Magazine") which he edited from Youngstown, O., for many years. Reading circles were established in nearly every parish throughout the country, which took up a systematic study of general literature. Mr. Mosher was born in Albany in 1860.

A friend sends us a copy of "The News," of Toronto, containing what purports to be the formula of abjuration pronounced by the Princess Ena on becoming a Catholic. It is, in fact, a wretched caricature of the formula in question, and the English of it is so execrable that a reputable paper would be ashamed to publish it.—The Casket.

The leading soprano and the basso of the choir of the Catholic cathedral, Seattle, have been informed of their resignation. Both had obtained a divorce from their respective spouses.

The Catholic club of the parish of the Immaculate Conception, Winnipeg, is gradually taking shape. About 100 young men have signed the membership roll. The permanent officers have not been elected as yet, the management being in charge of a temporary committee.

The recent appointment of J. W. Robinson as Third Judge of the Circuit Court of Hawaii is hailed in the United States as a great Catholic victory. The President made the nomination in the

face of a strong protest of Governor George R. Carter, of the Pacific possession, an ardent Congregationalist. The latter denomination in the early days of missionary work among these islands took advantage of their premier position to persecute the Catholic priests very severely. Since the appointment of Mr. Robinson, who is an Irish Catholic, Governor Carter has sent in his resignation to President Roosevelt.

Rev. Brother Peter O'Leary, of the Catholic Protectory, New York, was struck by a train recently while walking the track and was instantly killed. It is remarkable that the Brother had just given an instruction to his pupils on the uncertainty of life, instancing railroad accidents as one of the many forms of a sudden call of death.

The Catholic Educational Association of the United States will meet in Cleveland on July 10, 11 and 12.

The Home Secretary, Mr. Gladstone, rebuked English bigots in his reply to a request presented by T. H. Sloan M. P., on behalf of the Protestant Alliance, that an influential delegation be received regarding the conversion of Princess

Mr. Gladstone said: "I have given careful consideration to this request, but the circumstances of the case, in my opinion, do not appear to be such as would justify me in receiving the deputation. Any representation on the subject which you may wish to make I shall be ready to forward to the proper quarter."

The new lay teachers of France, with whom the government replaced the religious, have organized a union to secure an increase of salary which will amount to an additional burden of 44,000,000 francs in the education taxes. A writer in the "Revue des Deux Mondes" states that since the discharge of the religious teachers there is noticeable a lax enforcement of the rules of attendance, resulting in a steady decline in numbers. Many pupils are leaving without a knowledge of their alphabet, so that illiteracy, hitherto almost unknown in France, is now becoming common. Many of the lay teachers are employed as electioneering agents, their promotion depending on their anti-Catholic zeal.

The latest cry for religious education from Philadelphia. In the course of a paper entitled "Should the Public School Authorities yield a part or whole of one day each week to the religious training of its pupils?" read at a meeting of the Methodist pastors, Rev. E. H. Hoffman roundly scored the "non-sectarian" education in vogue, his principal charge being that while the public school system was friendly to religion, there were many teachers who did not hesitate to express their views of agnostic and naturalistic tendencies. He concluded: "The system as inculcated by the Catholic Church, whereby Catholic parents are held answerable in confession and sometimes refused absolution for the non-attendance of their children at parochial schools, is one upon which Protestants may well meditate."

The town council of Caudebec-les-Elbeuf (Seine inferieure) recently passed a resolution, behind closed doors, to destroy the magnificent stone Calvary, erected in 1866 in the centre of their cemetery. No one could be hired to do the work, so the councillors accomplished their degraded task themselves with picks and shovels under the cover of darkness.

The statement recently made that Father Negaharquet is the only Indian priest in the United States is questioned by "The Monitor," of San Francisco. It cites the case of Father Bouchard, who belonged to the Lenni Lenape tribe. He was a Jesuit and

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