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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16.

CURRENT COMMENT.

Luther's Death. Mr. Arthur Preuss's excellent Review has lost none of its pungency or point by moving from Chicago to St. Louis. It always fearlessly states both sides of all moot questions and is ever open to conviction. In one of the recent issues of this strikingly original paper we find a refutation of the story circulated some six years ago that Luther committed suicide by hanging himself, after a night's debauch, on one of the posts of his bed. There is, first, the strong negative proof that Janssen, the greatest of all authorities on the Reformation period, in his "Geschichte des deutschen Volkes," said nothing of Luther's suicide. Secondly, N. Paulus has traced the story to its source and found that it is a legend which originated long after Luther's death and deserves absolutely no credence. The famous hierarch has enough to answer for without that crowning crime.

Albert Pike. The latest issue of the same Review translates from the Cologne "Volkszeitung" an article declaring the Margiotta-Vaughan revelations about Freemasonry to be humbug; we advisedly say "declaring," for this article contains little or no proof of said declaration. Take, for instance, the following passage: "That they [the revelations of Margiotta and Miss Vaughan] are in reality fraudulent is proved in the very first place by the obvious untruth (?) of the chief allegation contained in these revelations... that there is a Masonic papacy and a central direction in Freemasonry. It is a notorious fact (?) that such a central direction does not exist; that Freemasonry is split up into about 150 independent organizations; and that all attempts of the Masons themselves to bring about a unification have been unsuccessful. Albert Pike was never anything else but Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of Charleston, which is (?) one of those 150 organizations." These are mere assertions unsupported by the shadow of a proof. Such phrases as "obvious untruth" and "notorious fact" are samples of the jargon current in Freemason circles, and incline us to suspect that the leading organ of Catholic Germany, the "Volkszeitung," has been deceived by some plausible Mason. On the other hand we have positive proof that Albert Pike was the supreme head of, at least, all American masons. The American Cyclopaedia says, in the biographical notice, probably written by himself, "he has held the highest offices in the Society of Freemasons," coupled with 'the highest,' implying of course that there is one central direction. Moreover, some seven years ago, before the first revelations anent Luciferianism appeared, we happened to meet in Michigan a prominent Mason

who, quite unsolicited, told us that he had received fifteen degrees from Albert Pike, whom he spoke of—as if it was a well-known fact—as the chief of all Masons in America. We had never heard his name before and gave little thought to the matter till we read Dr. Bataille's 'Diable au XIXe siecle,' containing a full account of Albert Pike. The testimony of our casual acquaintance is all the more valuable because he had no interest in deceiving us and laid no special stress upon what he meant merely as a parenthetical remark. Students of history know the cogency of such 'obiter dicta.'

Margiotta. Here is another of the same article's declarations: "The truthfulness of Margiotta and Miss Vaughan appears in a doubtful light, especially when we consider that the alleged election of Lemmi as Masonic Pope, which these writers describe in detail, as taking place on Sept. 20th, '98, did not take place at all." It is proverbially difficult to prove a bare negative, and yet the writer in the Volkszeitung attempts no proof, though the fact of Lemmi's election to the 'Supreme Pontificate' and of Miss Vaughan's secession from the majority vote appeared in the cablesgrams of that period. Just now, however, we are concerned with Mr. Margiotta's veracity. His public withdrawal from Masonry and reconciliation to the Church occurred in the summer of 1894. At that time a young friend, who took no interest in these matters and who was then travelling in Italy, sent us some Italian newspapers, among others a copy of the Tribuna, a recognized sympathizer with Italian Masonry. This copy contained a short paragraph quoting from a Catholic paper the news of the conversion of Margiotta 'one of the leading lights of Freemasonry.' Upon these last words the Tribuna's only comment was three points of exclamation and interrogation, thus, !!!??? Surely, if it had been able to impugn his veracity or trustworthiness, it would have gladly done so, especially as it knew that so prominent a convert would be likely to reveal something. Therefore we have reason to infer that Mr. Margiotta is no impostor.

Palladism. Finally, for we have no time to dissect the whole article, we would call attention to the weakness of this threefold attempt at proof: "That the revelations both of M. Margiotta and Miss Vaughan regarding Palladism in particular are fraudulent, is proved not only by the fact that hitherto no one knew anything of this rite; not only by the intrinsic improbability, aye, impossibility of the things and occurrences alleged by them; but particularly by the express testimony of the 'Bundesblatt,' the official organ of the German mother lodge (1896, No. 2), of Findel in his book 'Katholischer Schwindel,' and of other prominent Masons, (Lemmi in Rome, Goblet d'Aviella in Brussels, etc.)." First, it is not true that before Margiotta and Miss Vaughan's revelations "no one knew anything of" the Palladic rite. Archbishop Meurin, in his book, 'La Synagogue de Satan,' published several years before these later revelations, speaks of it as long known to him from his experience in India. Then, Dr. Bataille described it at length two or three years before either Margiotta or Miss Vaughan; and, though Mr. Preuss's Review justly calls 'Le Diable au XIXe Siecle' a lurid and exaggerated book, we have excellent authority for believing that his main contention, viz., the existence of Palladism, is correct. After reading the work, we wrote to a clear-headed, shrewd friend in France, asking him what he thought of Bataille's revelations. He answered that, having known the author from boyhood, he believed his story to be in the main true, but that Bataille had had the misfortune to employ as his collaborator "that queer fish," Leo Taxil. Perhaps the luridness and exaggerations are due to the latter. The book may be full of obvious inaccur-

acies and yet on the whole true. At any rate its principal disclosures have been since confirmed by revelations which bear no trace of collusion or mere plagiarism. As to the second attempt at proof by the Volkszeitung, most of the facts related by Margiotta and Miss Vaughan are not intrinsically impossible, indeed we know of none that are impossible. Supernatural no doubt many are, but not more wonderful than well authenticated facts in the history of mysticism, especially in the Lives of the Saints. This plea of improbability and impossibility has a strong materialistic flavor, it is not an argument that would appeal to a learned Catholic. The third proof attempted by the Volkszeitung is still more unfortunate. It distinctly betrays Masonic inspiration. How very childlike and bland a proceeding it is to quote Masonic authority in disproof of an accusation against Masonry. Why, it is the business of a criminal like Lemmi to plead "not guilty." A secret society is, by its very charter, committed to mendaciousness in its own defence. In conclusion we would say that we hold no brief for any of the anti-Masonic writers mentioned above, and that if proof be forthcoming that they are either dupes or deceivers, we shall gladly accept it; but, so far at least, the case against Mr. Margiotta and Miss Vaughan seems to us deplorably weak.

JUDGE ROUTHIER'S LECTURE.

Great as were our expectations, they were more than realized in Mr. Justice Routhier's lecture at St. Boniface College last Friday. The cultured audience, composed of the best people in St. Boniface and a fair sprinkling of friends from Winnipeg able to understand French, showed their appreciation of the lecturer's eloquence by repeated bursts of applause. The Hon. J. E. P. Prendergast, as Mayor of St. Boniface, introduced the Judge in a neat little address, briefly summarizing his many claims to fame as a jurist, a critic, a literary traveller and a poet. The learned judge began by begging his hearers not to believe all the fine things his friend Mr. Prendergast had said about him, for they must remember that Mr. Prendergast was a poet and all poets were allowed considerable licence. Then he dealt with the importance of religion in education, handling his subject in a series of tableaux and climaxes with great tact and skill. He was especially happy in his word-painting of the part played by water and light in the economy of the natural world and in the way he applied the double allegory to the needs of the human soul watered by Divine grace and illumined by supernatural light. The great mystery of the tomb, the Hereafter, 'l'au-dela' as he called it, was brought home to his hearers with a wealth of imagery and quotation and an earnestness which many a preacher might advantageously imitate. Though the Judge's voice was never loud, its quality was so penetrating as to reach every corner of the college hall. He excels in delicate touches of refined "esprit." Nothing of quite so exalted a literary flavor has ever been heard in Manitoba before, and it speaks well for the audience last Friday that they were able to take it all in.

THE C. M. B. A.

The Ninth Convention a Great Success.

The western delegates to the ninth biennial convention of the Catholic Mutual Benefit Association held at Ottawa last month were as follows: St. Mary's Branch, Winnipeg, F. W. Russell; Immaculate Conception Branch, Winnipeg, P. Klinkhammer; Rat Portage, J. E. Rice; Fort William, J. Murphy; Port Arthur, W. F. Fortune; St. Boniface, L. J. Collin; Somerset, J. A. Decosse; Battleford, L. O. P. Noel; Prince Albert, C. Lagorgendiere; Calgary, Dr. Rouleau; Edmonton, N. D. Beck. Most of them spent a few days in the east after their labors at the convention and some of them have not yet returned. Mr. Russell arrived in the city on Thursday last and gives the following account of the proceedings. The delegates to the number of about three hundred assembled

in the Opera House in the capital city on the morning of Tuesday the 25th August, and accompanied by the members of the local branches proceeded in procession to the Basilica. Nearly one thousand members were in line and they presented a fine appearance, in fact, it was stated by the Ottawa press that no better shewing had ever been made on the streets of the city. Grand High Mass was celebrated by Bishop Emard, of Valleyfield, P. Q., a member of the association, and eloquent sermons were given in French and English. After services the procession was reformed and on arrival at the Opera House the convention was called to order by Grand President O. K. Fraser. Addresses of welcome were then delivered by Mr. F. R. Latchford on behalf of the advisory board of the C. M. B. A. in Ottawa; by his worship Mayor Borthwick and by His Grace Archbishop Duhamel. These were appropriately replied to by the grand president, and then the convention settled down to business. The first item on the programme was the Grand President's report. Among other things he said that the progress of the association had been most satisfactory. During the term 3,000 members had been added. He directed attention to the satisfactory condition of the reserve fund which now amounts to \$56,000 and he advocated resistance to any reduction of this fund. He pointed to Dominion Government returns as shewing that no other association in Canada was managing its affairs so economically as the C. M. B. A. Following the instructions of the last grand council he had communicated with the Archbishops and Bishops of the Dominion for the purpose of procuring their opinion as to the desirability of introducing signs and passwords, and it was found that without exception they were strongly opposed to any such action. This announcement was received with cheering by the delegates. The president's report having been received and adopted, the report of the committee on Laws was read. Upwards of one hundred and fifty proposed amendments to the constitution had been submitted by branches to the committee, most of which were laid before the convention for consideration. It was soon apparent that the delegates were not inclined to make many changes, the prevailing opinion evidently being that the constitution of the association is a model one and that nothing would be gained by tinkering with it. The questions which created the most discussion were amendments proposed regarding the grand council conventions. The first was that branches should pay the expenses of delegates. This was voted down. After lengthy discussion a motion to provide for triennial instead of biennial conventions was also defeated, and a proposition by a Toronto branch to have branches formed into districts and elect a representative for every two hundred members met with a like fate. It was resolved that the executive be empowered to employ organizers if they see fit; that contracts for printing be let by tender; that district deputies be abolished and there be only one class of deputies to be known as "Grand deputies." A proposition for the abolition of the present finance committee and the appointment of chartered accountants to audit the books was defeated, as was also a proposed amendment that a clause be inserted in member's certificates providing that if the member commits suicide within two years after initiation the certificate should be null and void. Other motions passed will give the financial secretary power to accept arrears and reinstate members between meetings of branches; the grand secretary will publish in the official organ the date when all branches pay their accounts; and several other minor amendments to the constitution were adopted. The report of the committee on laws having been thus disposed of, the reports of the trustees, the financial committee, the solicitor and the Medical Examiner were taken up and adopted. They were all of a very satisfactory nature and shewed that the past two years had been the most successful in the history of the association in Canada. Next came the selection of a place for the 1898 convention. Invitations were received from many eastern cities and by a close vote Quebec was selected. This having been settled the delegates proceeded to elect officers for the coming year. Hon. M. F. Hackett was unanimously elected grand president and on rising to acknowledge the compliment was given a great ovation by the delegates, being cheered for several minutes. In thanking the convention he made a speech which the Ottawa papers declared was the most eloquent address ever delivered in the opera house, and probably the most eloquent ever heard in Ottawa. The other officers elected were as follows: First-vice president, Dr. Bellevue, of Shediac, N. B.; second-vice president, Bernard O'Connell, of Dublin, Ont.; sec-

retary, S. R. Brown, London, Ont.; treasurer, W. J. McKee, Windsor, Ont.; marshal, P. J. Montreuil, Lewis, P. Q.; guard, J. J. Weinert, Newstadt, Ont.; trustees, Father Tiernan, London, Ont.; P. J. O'Keefe, St. John, N. B.; J. J. Mahan, Kingston, Ont.; W. P. Killackey, Chatham, Ont.; P. J. Rooney, Toronto, Ont.; committee on laws, T. P. Coffee, Guelph, Ont.; Judge Rouleau, Calgary, N. W. T.; J. L. Carleton, St. John, N. B.; committee on finance, John Ronan, Hamilton, Ont.; G. W. Cooke, Amherst, N. S.; C. D. Hebert, Three Rivers, P. Q. Everybody who knows anything about the C. M. B. A. will agree that in these officers the association has a most able executive for the coming two years. The customary votes of thanks were then passed and the convention was brought to a close about 4 o'clock in the morning by the singing of the national anthem. The Ottawa papers declared that a more industrious body of delegates never attended a convention in that city. They devoted all forenoon, afternoon and most of the night to business, the only recreation being a garden party at the Governor-General's residence to which an hour was given. Regarding this it may be noted that although many other associations and organizations held conventions at Ottawa this summer, the C. M. B. A. delegates were the only body honored by the Governor-General in this way. Summing up the whole affair Mr. Russell says there can be no doubt this convention was a grand and striking success and augurs well for the future of the association in Canada. It created a great stir in Ottawa. The streets of the city were lined during the procession to the Basilica and it was the verdict of all that no such shewing had ever before been made there by any organization. During the deliberations of the convention the opera house was crowded. The delegates occupied the bottom floor, and the galleries were thronged with interested spectators. The papers of Ottawa each devoted several columns every day to reports of the proceedings and were highly complimentary in their comments. They declared that no convention of benevolent societies ever surpassed the C. M. B. A. for able men or for orators, and that the management is in the hands of some of the most reliable and capable men of the Dominion. Every member should be proud of belonging to an organization which can make such a grand shewing, and should shew that he appreciates his membership by doing his best to extend the scope of the association and add to its members.

OUR OTTAWA AGENCY.

Mr. F. Kehoe, Bookseller and Stationer, of 142 Rideau street, Ottawa, has kindly consented to act as agent for the Northwest Review, and is hereby empowered to give receipts for subscriptions.

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Trusting that your Institute is meeting with all the success such a one is worthy of, and with sincerest possible thanks, I am,
Yours truly grateful,
BEN. H. SWAFFIELD.
—
Mr. Swaffield's reputation as user of alcoholic stimulants was as established and well known in England as in Manitoba, where not to know "Benny" argues one's self unknown. Scores of letters fully as strong and convincing as the above one are on file at the Evans Institute, 628 Balmoral street, where Mr. Swaffield was so successfully treated. Address the Evans Institute, 628 Balmoral street.