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THE SCHOOL LAW DEBATE.

We already mentioned in our columns that without any demand on the part of Catholics for a change in the Separate school law touching the manner of voting at Separate school elections, two bills and a resolution have been under consideration in the Ontario Legislature having reference to this matter.

The resolution of Mr. W. R. Meredith had been already disposed of, proposing a compulsory ballot for both Public and Separate schools. We pointed out that it had not been proposed because either Public or Separate school supporters desired a compulsory ballot, but because that gentleman is compelled to make some show, at least, of interfering with the Separate school system, in order to please the P. P. A. and the anti-Catholic element of Ontario generally. Strange as it may seem, in order to carry out this purpose, and at the same time to put on an appearance of dealing with Catholics and Protestants alike, he was willing to tinker with the Public school system so as to have the satisfaction of tinkering with the Separate school law, and so shamelessly was this done that he practically admitted in his speech on this bill that such was his purpose. It was, however, deservedly defeated on a strictly party vote, the two Catholic Conservatives in the Legislature supporting Mr. Meredith's motion.

We cannot too strongly condemn this making of the Catholic school system a shuttlecock to serve the political ends of either one party or the other; and for this reason we opposed not Mr. Meredith's bill alone, but also those of Mr. J. Conmee, of Algoma West, and Mr. McCallum of East Lambton.

The last two bills were dealt with on the 21st of April, Mr. Conmee's being supported by the Government. This passed to a second reading by a party vote also of 52 to 30. It gives to Separate school trustees the power to ordain that School elections shall be by ballot. This is not so objectionable as Mr. Meredith's motion, yet it is objectionable to the extent that it is a change which Catholics have not asked for, and it shows that both parties in the Legislature are ready to make a plaything of Catholic interests.

But here, it may be asked: "If the ballot is a good thing, why should it not be adopted in the Separate school elections?"

This question was, indeed, suggested, and answered by Mr. Clancy in his own way during the debate on Mr. Conmee's bill. He said:

"There was talk of its being forced upon them, and the House had been told that bigots were in favor of it. No sane man would, even if bigots also asserted it, deny that two and two make four. No man's course should be changed because bigots also held it. The contention that the ballot should be rejected by Roman Catholics because it is given them with ulterior objects I regard as far-fetched and lame."

This is but a "far-fetched and lame" excuse for Mr. Clancy's making himself the tool of our enemies by supporting Mr. Meredith's bill.

The utility of the ballot in ordinary municipal and legislative elections is a matter of opinion. As to ourselves, we believe that in such case it is beneficial, because it is well-known that wealthy people who have many employees, or other persons who are under their power, have exercised an undue influence to prevent freedom of election.

Nothing of this kind has occurred in reference to Separate school elections; and it has not been asserted with any show of truth or reason that the like has occurred even in a single instance, much less that it has occurred to such an extent as to require a legislative change to correct the evil.

It does not appear that even in the Public school elections such evils have occurred, and, therefore, though the Public schools have had for many years

the option of using the ballot, if they thought proper, only a few sections have adopted it.

In the case of the Separate schools, there is still less need of the ballot than in the Public schools. In most Separate school sections there is not even a contest, and in January, 1894, there was a contest in only thirteen. The proportion of contests in the Public school elections is certainly much greater, as the frequency with which we have known such to have taken place proves, though we have no detailed statistics by means of which the fact may be established for the whole Province. It is, therefore, a most gratuitous insult to the Separate school supporters to assume, as our enemies do, that they are in special need of protection from oppression. It is an insult to our clergy to assert, as Mr. Meredith and his followers have done, especially during the last general election canvass, that it is from them that the laity are to be protected.

To this we may add that a ballot, to be carried out properly, involves considerably more labor and expense in the necessary elaborate arrangements than the present mode of election. In forcing the ballot, this extra expense will be placed upon poor sections which would be ill able to bear it.

As we have said before now, we repeat, we have no particular objection to offer to the ballot in itself; but we do strongly object to tinkering with the Catholic Separate school, by introducing changes into it without a petition from the Catholic body in general and even against their well-expressed will; that will having been expressed unmistakably at every election where the ballot was made an issue.

During the debate on Mr. Conmee's bill, the Hon. C. F. Fraser made an able and eloquent defence of Catholic rights, which will be found elsewhere in this issue. He struck the right note when he said:

"We have not asked for the protection of another law to be thrust upon us to guard us. When we find our rights invaded and our privileges denied to us, then you will hear our voices. You will not be left in any doubt about it at all. It is because we have nothing in that regard to complain of, nothing of which to make a matter of reproach against our clergy, that we have remained quiescent; and perhaps in that respect we have been to some extent to blame."

We cannot see the matter in precisely the same light with Mr. Fraser. The absence of agitation among Catholics seems to us to arise from the cause that they desire no change, whereas in the case of agitation, there would have been occasion given to Orange and P. P. A. counter-resolutions in greater quantity than they have yet been poured out upon the country. May it not be said, therefore, that quiescence was the most prudent course for the Catholics to adopt?

Mr. McCallum's, or the P. P. A. bill, went further than to impose the ballot on Separate schools. That gentleman declared that the object of his bill was to assimilate the Public and Separate school laws. That it had no such purpose is evident from the fact that it aimed at increasing the difficulty for a ratepayer to become a Separate school supporter. This he proposed to effect by leaving out the word agent from the Separate school, so that application to become a Separate school supporter should be made in person.

This proposal would be against the British North America Act. Mr. McCallum seems to have been blissfully unconscious of the fact that the Ontario Legislature has no power to make such a law. Nevertheless the bill was supported by Mr. Meredith and all his party, except Mr. Sol. White of South Essex. In this Mr. White was somewhat more staunch to Catholic interests than Mr. Clancy, who voted for the second reading of the bill while acknowledging that he was opposed to some of its clauses, which he hoped to see amended in committee. We must say we are amazed that Mr. Clancy's adherence to his party should have led him into this act of treason to Catholic interests.

We very much regret that the ill health of Hon. Mr. Fraser forced him to interrupt his speech on the first day of the discussion, so that he was obliged to deliver the second portion on the following day, and was even then unable to conclude it. Very general sympathy was expressed for the honorable gentleman on both sides of the house, for during his twenty years' occupancy of a seat in the Cabinet he has earned by his integrity and ability the respect of all. It had been asserted that the cause of his retirement from the Ministry was disagreement with the course of the Government on the school question. His illness during

the debate has shown to all that the actual cause is his declining health.

THE MEMOIRS OF BISHOP BURKE.

By Cornelius O'Brien, D. D., Archbishop of Halifax.

The "Memoirs of Bishop Burke" is the title of the latest work from the pen of the cultured Archbishop of Halifax. It is not of many pages, but terse and full of vigor, and its wealth of illustration, incidental reflections and criticism make it a mine of information such that a student cannot afford to neglect. It is written in a style polished and oftentimes epigrammatic, and is, like everything that comes from the gifted pen of the Halifax prelate, remarkable for its exactness and precision.

Its publication was, the author remarks in the preface, prompted by the hope that it might "in some slight degree aid in building up a national literature."

And this is our shame. We are not of yesterday. Our country has thrown aside the swathing bands of infancy. She is with virile tread pursuing her way up the broad avenues of prosperity and of civilization; and yet she has no literature that can be styled Canadian. Other lands have engrossed the attention of her men of letters, and the rich lessons that might be revealed by Canadian tradition and history are left ungarnered.

Dr. O'Brien has turned aside from the beaten track. He has devoted himself to the task of tracing the career of one "who, though not by birth a Canadian was one by long adoption, by long years of service for the public good, and by love of and faith in what his keen foresight gave him a calm and settled assurance would be a great country."

He has thus earned the gratitude of all who love and believe in their country and who have aught of reverence for those who have laid well and wisely the foundations of our civilization. Well has the author limned the portrait of the missionary and Bishop who was afflicted by no danger and daunted by no obstacle in the performance of his duty. From the day he arrived at Quebec, friendless and moneyless, a stranger and unknown, to the day when, worn out with incessant toil, he went forth to meet the God whose cross he bore, exemplified in his own life and preached to men, he was ever the same resolute and intrepid man of duty. He was a maker of history, not one to be led by the strings of hide-bound conservatism, but of bold and original mind, that took in at a glance the needs of the country and the means of satisfying them. He was opposed and oftentimes threatened in the accomplishment of his designs, but opposition but redoubled his energies. He was no stranger to the fact that the timid go in bands and the brave in single file. He had learned, the saintly Bishop, that toil unwearying and constant was the essential condition of success, and towards the eventide of his eventful life he had the satisfaction of seeing the seeds of Christianity ripening into a goodly harvest and the assurance that its would be gathered by the generation of the future.

Dr. O'Brien writes very interestingly of the Church in Halifax. "What we call the Church in Halifax," he says, "does not differ from, nor is it a distinct foundation from, the Church of Acadia. It is simply a continuous development of the mustard seed sown at Port Royal in 1604."

Few are aware of the stringent laws enacted by the Government for "the suppression of Popery." But happily this was the last cry of unreasoning rage from the loathsome and uncanny demon of bigotry. The Archbishop says that the atmosphere of Halifax was always a dissolvent of bigotry: "There is some subtle, broadening influence in the ocean air that makes the Haligonian intellectually large-brained, and develops generosity of spirit. Nowhere on this continent perhaps were more stringent penal statutes enacted, and nowhere did they so quickly become obsolete; and nowhere has there been so little persecution and so much kindly feeling between Catholics and Protestants."

This is high praise from a man who scorns to use the honied words of flattery, and will doubtless be appreciated by the dwellers in the city by the sea.

The Memoirs will be a revelation to many who have gleaned their knowledge of our early history from writings ornate and rhetorical, but sadly deficient in the essentials of true history—earnest and painstaking research. But last year and a student would have been stigmatized as a historical heretic had

he even insinuated that Quebec was not the mother of the civilization of America. So it has been handed down from generation to generation, and song and story have told us that the old walled city throned high amidst the butting cliffs washed by the St. Lawrence was the source whence came the stream of our Christian faith and morality. Dr. O'Brien, however, pierces the fiction from breast to backbone with a blade as sharp and true as that of Damascus. He, excepting always the Spanish colonies, claims for Nova Scotia the title of Mother Church, and few are there who after reading the Memoirs will deny it to be just and tenable. He shows that in Nova Scotia was the first town built and the first church raised to the Almighty. In 1604 Rev. Nicholas Aubrey and another priest arrived with De Monts and his first settlers on the shores of the Bay of Fundy. Nothing daunted by difficulties, they cleared the land, erected a church, and the mission that has come down to us with an unbroken continuity from that period had its beginning. This fact is important, for it proves conclusively that eleven years before the arrival of a priest in Quebec was the fire of Christianity enkindled on the shores of Nova Scotia.

Some will feel aggrieved at the rude demolition of an historical idol, and many a glowing passage in the glory of Quebec—Mother Church of America—that has held an honored place in the histories of our Gallic brethren will doubtless be relegated to the regions of romance and of poetry. Facts are incontrovertible, pearls verily of exceeding price, worth more in history than the dross of much sentiment. Some historians assert that the mission of Port Royal was destroyed a few years after its founding, but the Memoirs furnish incontrovertible proof of its continuity. It had indeed many reverses, but it was ever a beacon light, shedding its mild and invigorating radiance on the severely afflicted hearts of the Acadians.

There was ever the gathering ground of the exiles, who would not, despite bribe and persecution, surrender their heritage of faith, and who, in dark and bitter days, when all hope seemed lost, were consoled and strengthened by the priest of Irish blood sent thither by the Bishops of Halifax. And if to-day they are prosperous and united, with a bright destiny before them, they owe it to the enlightened zeal of the Bishops of Halifax, who were their staunchest friends and truest protectors. "It was," says Dr. O'Brien, "a race of martyrs who came to the aid and rescue of the sorely afflicted Acadians, but they were not their brothers in blood. Some Frenchmen, it is true, were procured later on; but the men who throttled the bigots, asserted and enforced the rights of all Catholics and made the Acadians what they are to-day were the sons of Erin, mailed in the unshaken faith of their martyred ancestors."

We advise our readers to read the "Memoirs of Bishop Burke." They have all the qualities that give a book a permanent value—justness of thought and chaste and elegant diction. It should be on every home book shelf, for it is the bearer of the priceless relics of a heritage of loftiest thoughts and lessons most

THE HOLY FATHER'S LOVE FOR POLAND.

The action of the representative of Cracow University, who is now in Rome, is in striking contrast to the abusive language used by the Berlin *Neue Freie Presse*, and the *Dziennik Polski* of Lemberg, Austria, in reference to the Encyclical Letter of Pope Leo XIII. to the Polish Bishops. The impartial reference of the latter journal to the Holy Father was endorsed by the *Toronto Mail* of the 13th of April as follows:

"It seems impossible that the head of the Catholic Church could have heard of the wail of distress that came from the murdered Russian Catholics. But the Vatican diplomacy has attained its object; and in the interests of the Franco-Russian *entente*, a brutal blow has been struck at the Catholic Poles."

We pointed out in our last issue how unjust was this insulting language, as there is nothing but affection for the people of Poland to be found in the Pope's Encyclical, and this is borne out by the way in which the document is regarded by the Vice Rector of the University, who is also one of the representatives for Vienna in the Austrian Chamber of Deputies.

As soon as the vice-Rector read the kind expressions of the encyclical towards his Polish compatriots, he went to the Vatican to offer the homage of his gratitude to the Pope in his own

name, and on behalf of the university, on account of his love for Poland. The special reference made by the Holy Father to the University was the immediate occasion of this act, as the Pope said:

"We much desire that the University of Cracow, an ancient and illustrious seat of learning, should defend its rights and maintain its character for excellence. . . . In your university, as in those under the stimulating auspices of our well-beloved son, your Cardinal Bishop, We may admire the union of the highest scientific culture with the doctrine of faith, etc."

In regard to Poland itself and its people, the Holy Father declares that he always had "very closely at heart their interests," and he exhorts the Bishops to defend the honor and sacred rights of the Catholic Church, and, further, reminds them that in their dealings with the Government they have the right to appeal to the engagements which have been concluded with the Apostolic See.

He exhorts them indeed to fulfil faithfully their duties as subjects, but he does not ask them to submit to oppression; and though he does state that the Emperor of Russia made some arrangements favorable to the Catholics of the Empire, he does not hesitate to say in terms quite plain that the position of the Church and of the Catholic Poles needs to be improved. It is, undoubtedly, due to this fact that the Russian Government has prohibited the publication of the encyclical in the Russian papers. Also, Mr. Iswolski, who has been for some years in Rome in the capacity of Russian agent at the Vatican Court, will not be permitted now to return to his post. Thus the Russian Government marks its displeasure at the Holy Father's utterances, notwithstanding the fact that they were as mild and conciliatory as they could possibly be, when it is considered under what a hideous tyranny the Catholic Poles have been and are still ground down.

Of course, the cause of the anger of the Government at the Pope's utterances is the implied reproach of cruelty which any one at all acquainted with the history of religion in Russia, cannot help reading in the Encyclical, as it were, between the lines.

Thus the document states that the Government engaged to arbitrate, or at least to moderate, the laws by which Catholic ecclesiastics were so harshly treated. The Holy Father adds:

"From that time we have never neglected an opportunity to insist upon the performance of these pledges. More than that, we have even referred the matter to the Emperor himself. We have pointed out the friendship he has ever professed for us, and his desire to do justice to your cause. We shall never cease to appeal to him, and, above all, to God; for the heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord."

The references to which we have here referred are the only passages in the Encyclical to which any exception could be taken; and the fact that exception has been taken to them shows that the Holy Father can effect more, and has effected more, for the Poles by his conciliatory attitude towards the Czar, than would have been done if he had thundered out denunciations against Russian tyranny, or had refused to admit Mr. Iswolski to his presence in the capacity of Russian agent.

The Poles are grateful to the Holy Father for the whole Encyclical, and to show their gratitude it is their intention to make a great pilgrimage to Rome in the autumn, under the guidance of Mgr. Stablewski, Archbishop of Posen. This testimony to their confidence in the Holy Father outweighs all the vituperation which an anti-Catholic press belches out against him.

The assertion that the Franco-Russian alliance is the work of Pope Leo XIII. will be great news to both powers concerned. It is generally believed that neither of them is over-amenable to the Pope's influence; but perhaps the *Mail* is wiser than the rest of mankind and sees further into the grindstone than do other people.

HON. JOHN O'DONNELL, of New York, is the framer of a bill that will, if enacted, do much to destroy the liquor traffic. It is practically prohibition, but without its customary objectionable features. It provides a plan by which the majority of the legal voters of any town or county, together with a preponderance of the tax-paying interest of the community, may sign a petition against the granting of any licenses to sell intoxicating liquors. If the petition is sustained no licenses shall be granted for a period of five years. At the end of five years, the success of a similar petition would secure prohibition for a further term.

CLERICAL STUDIES IN NEW YORK UNION SEMINARY.

It has been the boast of the Protestant sects, and especially of the Presbyterians, that their clerical students pay special attention to the learning of Greek in their college course, so that they may be able to study and understand the New Testament in the original language in which it is written, and so be able to explain the Scriptures to their congregations when they enter the ministry. Thus it has been claimed that they have a peculiarly well educated clergy who are able to put themselves at the head of every educational movement.

A recent examination of the candidates for the ministry held on April 10, at the Union Theological Seminary of New York, has exploded this boast in a most unexpected way. This is the seminary of which the Rev. Dr. Briggs, who was condemned for heresy by the General Assembly, is the chief theological teacher. The examination was conducted before the New York Presbytery.

Dr. Briggs is famous for his discoveries in the field of what is customary to call "higher criticism." This means that special study of the Bible which results in the denial of the inspiration and authenticity of portions of Sacred Scripture; and in this department the students showed themselves to be very skilful, but they were unable to translate correctly a single sentence of the New Testament from the Greek, and much less, any of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew. It may well be asked how this new generation of teachers will be able to instruct their people in the saving doctrines of Christianity, when their clerical education is made to consist merely in sapping the foundations of Christian teachings, instead of learning the signification of those teachings by becoming better acquainted with the language in which they were written.

It cannot be supposed that in the other Presbyterian seminaries which are of less note than the Union the education is of a higher degree: so the prospect that the Presbyterian Church of the future will have a clergy which will be able to cope with the spreading infidelity of the age is very slim indeed. It is by far more likely that they will aid in propagating unbelief in all Christian truth.

A MISSED DESTINY.

The manuscript of a short novel by Napoleon I. has been discovered among some dusty old papers and documents. It is passing strange that the Man of Destiny should have through all the events of his career preserved this boyish effort. But it was the child of his brain and written at a period of life when the boy of Corsica looked forward to be the bearer of the cross, not of the sword.

The assertion may strike strangely on ears that have heard that his earliest thoughts were upon camps and fields of battle. It may to some minds dissipate the glamour of romance associated with the early days of the French conqueror, but it is a fact immutable that his first love was for the Church. This is well proved by a letter written by his father, Joseph Bonaparte, on the 26th of August, 1785, to Monsieur Isoard in Aix en Provence. We read that Napoleon, having no inclination for a military career, wished to enter a seminary for the purpose of equipping himself for the priesthood. He was then sixteen years of age. His design was not accomplished, and henceforward we see him devoting himself with enthusiasm to the study of military affairs. But through all the phases of her marvellous career the dream of his boyhood was ever with him. When the siege of St. Jean d'Acre was raised on the 20th of May, 1799, the exclamation of the future Emperor was, "I have missed my destiny."

As he told Count Las Cases, in after years at St. Helena, he would, had he taken St. Jean d'Acre, have effected a complete revolution in the East. But Sir Sidney Smith beat back his unvanquished squadrons and he recrossed the Mediterranean to be for fifteen years the autocrat of Europe—to be at once the most beloved and the most accursed man in the world—to immolate on the altar of his ambition myriads of his subjects. His throne was encircled by the bravest and most dashing soldiers that have ever played a role in the theatre of the world. The kingdoms of Europe were subject to his brothers. He made his brother Joseph King of Spain; his brother Louis king of Holland; his brother Jerome king of Westphalia. He gave laws