

A FLAGRANT INCONSISTENCY

Says the Yorkton Enterprise:

"The Winnipeg Free Press, in an article which we published in our last issue foreshadows special legislation for the Doukhoborts, and goes so far as to say that such legislation will be introduced at the next session of parliament. The question appears to have been raised by the filing of some 116 applications for the cancellation of Doukhobor homestead entries on the ground of non-compliance with the homesteading clauses of the Dominion Lands Act, and there is much speculation as to what further special privileges are to be given these people. One of the terms of the agreement entered into with them by the Government of Canada was that they should be exempt from military service, and another that they should be allowed to settle in villages, provision for the latter being made in the Dominion Lands Act. The Enterprise does not intend to raise the question whether such agreement should have been made, and it is scarcely necessary to say that the government must scrupulously keep the faith with Doukhoborts and live up to the terms of the agreement. Is it doing so when it asks them whom it has exempted from military service to swear that they will 'defend to the utmost of their power' the king? Is it not saying to them, 'We have promised you that you will never have to bear arms, and will never have to fight for the country which gives you free lands, but nevertheless before we give you patents for these lands we will make you swear that you will bear arms and fight?' If it was agreed between the Government and the Doukhoborts, and we believe it was, that they should be exempt from bearing arms, then the naturalization oath, should, as a matter of common fairness and good faith, be adapted for the Doukhoborts so as to make it consistent with the terms of the agreement. The Liberal party may break faith with the people of Canada as often and as long as the people of Canada will tolerate it, but the Liberal Government of Canada acting for the people of Canada, must keep faith with those with whom it enters into contracts and agreements."

This is an admirable principle applied with unerring logic by our Yorkton contemporary. By all means let the Federal Government be reminded that it "must scrupulously keep faith" with "those with whom it enters into contracts and agreements." But, then, how about the separate school contracts and agreements made by the same Federal Government? Surely, these contracts and agreements, based upon the Constitution of Canada and backed by Imperial promise and order, are far more sacred and reasonable than were the concessions made to the Doukhobors. And yet the Yorkton Enterprise not only never has a word to say about that Federal compact solemnly pledging its acknowledgment of a right to separate schools, but persistently and savagely attacks the supporters of those schools. Has it a special code of fairplay and generosity for the use of a turbulent sect whose conduct in this country almost leads one to believe that the tales of Russian persecution are slanders, and another and diametrically opposite code for the use of Catholics who number 41 per cent. of the entire population of Canada?

This flagrant inconsistency is one more proof of the blinding power of religious prejudice. Because the Doukhobors are Protestants of the Quaker stripe they were received with open arms and anything that they asked for was granted, even exemption from military service. Against this extreme and unwise concession not even the ultra-loyalists had a word to say. But if the Catholic Galicians, who came in far greater numbers, had stipulated for Catholic schools with Catholic textbooks under Catholic control, a perfectly constitutional stipulation which would have interfered with none of their neighbors, what a howl the Protestant bigots would have set up! And yet these Catholic Galicians cheerfully comply with all the laws of our country, whereas the Doukhobors, according to the Yorkton Enterprise itself, refuse to comply with the ordinary laws of the country, such as the registration of vital statistics, the sacred laws of marriage which condemn free love and changing wives at will, and the duty of educating their children. This refusal has indeed opened the eyes of our Yorkton contemporary to the danger of tolerating such abuses and makes it clamor "for a firm administration of the law as it stands;" but the inconsistency we pointed out above has not dawned upon the horizon of the Enterprise.

Current Comment (contd.)

The Spanish had so done the preliminary work that it should not be difficult for us to take it up and complete it. Indeed, the Spanish did more for the Filipinos than any other colonizing nation has ever done for an Oriental people. Spain actually impressed her ideas and principles upon them. She gave them her religion and language and civilization. She did not merely scratch the surface. She really affected and influenced the lives of the natives. Malays they are, yet they are like no other Malays. In place of pure barbarism, cannibalism and idolatry, Spain implanted the Roman Catholic religion, which is to-day the religion of nine-tenths of the people. Spain also elevated the status of the Filipino woman. In other Oriental countries the woman is little better than a slave. In the Philippines, on the contrary, the woman is the 'business man' of the couple. She it is who really manages the estate or household, and it is almost more important that we get her good will and friendship than the man's. The work done by the Roman Catholic friars in the three centuries Spain held the Islands was wonderful, and cannot fail to excite our admiration. And, in spite of her many troubles there, Spain was continuing the work of Christianizing the Islands when our war came on."

And Congressman Herbert Parsons, a member of the Taft party, has written these words to the "New York Tribune":

"We are fortunate not only in having the Philippines, but also in having the Filipinos as our wards to educate to self-government. They are advanced Malays, and their advancement has been due to what Spain did for them, despite the oppression of her officials, and to all that the Roman Catholic Church has done. The recent Church troubles there have rather obscured the fact that until within the last generation most of the progress made there was the result of the Church's work."

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WINNIPEG NOTES

The popularity to which St. Mary's Lyceum has attained must be most gratifying to all Catholics. The number on the membership roll has now reached one hundred, and new members continue to pour in. At each meeting an average of from twelve to fifteen young men seek admission to the society.

That there is abundance of talent amongst this young men's society we have already received ample testimony, and if further proof were necessary, it is to be found in the fact that a hockey team and a dramatic club are amongst the latest additions to the society.

A drama, "The Malediction," which has been under rehearsal by the members for some time, is making satisfactory progress, and it was decided at the weekly meeting on Thursday night to make arrangements for the staging of the same in the Winnipeg Theatre, some time about the middle of January.

The management of the Hockey team is in the hands of Wm. Bawlf, John Coyle, and Ralph Paterson, all well known in the athletic world; and, as a capable team has been got together we shall be very much surprised if the

Lyceum does not figure prominently in the Hockey competition over the end of the season.

In addition to the usual business transacted on Thursday night, a very enjoyable musical and literary entertainment was provided by the members.

The Lyceum Orchestra has just added some of the latest and most up-to-date music to its already extensive repertoire. The new selections will be rehearsed for the first time at practice on Tuesday next.

Commenting on the Archbishop's masterly speech at the inauguration of the Lyceum, a young settler in Winnipeg who hails from the Island of Saints and Scholars, delivered himself thus to a representative of the Northwest Review: "His Grace found his way straight to the heart of the Irish portion of his audience when he uttered that magnificent tribute to the memory of 'The Liberator,' our own Daniel O'Connell."

"Fred is very capable," said Aunt Nancy. "But I doubt if he has head enough to fill his father's shoes."

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