

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

## ROMAN CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN ONTARIO.

The March number of the "Educational Monthly" contains an able and suggestive article on this subject by Mr. Thomas O'Hagan, head-master of the separate school Belleville. That article deserves attention from all friends of education whether Protestant or Roman Catholic. In it the claim is put forth for a system of separate schools, in the sense of "the same legislation, the same government, the same care that is bestowed on public schools," not only "representation in the matter of examination of teachers" but "provision for the proper and uniform supervision of our separate schools . . . the right to establish Catholic model schools for the training of Catholic teachers and representation in the Educational Department"—logically also would follow a Catholic university, as is now demanded for Ireland. The demand is neither more or less than that in every respect the separate schools and public schools shall be put on an equality, and that this shall be done from public funds, nine tenths of which, if not a much larger proportion, must be taken from Protestant pockets. In other words Protestants are to pay for teaching the principles of the Papacy in institutions avowedly opposed to and independent of Protestant control. Hear Mr. O'Hagan. "I cannot see but one system of schools in this Province, and this comprises both separate and public schools. Each school has a share in the advancement of educational progress in our midst—each is public in every sense of the word."

Mr. O'Hagan then tells us wherein they differ, viz. "the light in which Protestants and Catholics view the purposes and ultimate object of a true education. This gulf must necessarily exist, nor can any accommodating legislation or specious compromise bridge the chasm. In vain will school boards and school authorities moot amalgamation. The Catholic Church in educational matters, as in matters of faith, is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. The Catholic Church just says to the state, 'I know how to educate, you do not.'" We heartily thank Mr. O'Hagan for his plain talk. Can our politicians, who say Roman Catholicism is changing, take it in? And yet the state is to pay for this education, which it cannot give—in other words is to find for the Roman Catholic Church, from public sources, whatever funds may be demanded by the Church for educating Roman Catholic children as the Church pleases.

Mr. O'Hagan makes a strong point in another direction, however, in which we cordially agree with him. While admitting that our public schools are "efficiently fulfilling the purposes for which they were designed" and comparing them to a man of admirable form, beauty and proportion, he adds with sarcasm, the more biting if not intended,

"Should we go a step further and enquire about the beauty of the soul, I ask, would its moral being correspond to its flashy intellectual grace on the surface? Let the virtue of a Canadian people one hundred years hence answer. It is not my intention to arraign the public schools of Ontario before a tribunal to make confession of their sins, or to answer for the faith that is in them. This is not my business. The public schools belong to the state, and if they have any school sins to answer for, or chastening virtues to be admired, Catholics are partakers of neither the one or the other. This can, at least, be happily said of our public schools, that incidental moral instruction has not as yet been forbidden in their class rooms, nor is religious instruction regarded in any light as a crime. Not so in the American Republic. In the "eat and drink and be merry" of the Commonwealth, proud intellect reigns supreme. The soul is nowhere. What is the consequence of this? The boasted state school, in all its intellectual glory, is but the cradle of infidelity, the noxious nursery of a godless race. The Government which legislates God out of the school, and guards its portals like a fallen angel with fiery sword in hand against the introduction of religion within its precincts, is but sharpening the claws of the people to commit crimes which will necessitate a still more fiery sword to guard and keep within the iron portals of a prison wall. The greatest statesmen America ever produced were educated under religious influences. Now, scarcely a shadow of religion lingers around her schools. Shall the future statesmen be but shadows of the past? So much for religion in education."

Again we thank Mr. O'Hagan. The above is well put and should make Protestants pause and think. The conclusion of the article is also good, answering as it does the boastful spirit and love of display shown by our public school system as contrasted with the unostentatious diligence of those convent schools to which "many Protestants prefer to send their daughters on account of the virtuous and careful training

which they receive at the hands of their teachers, the sisters, and which often shapes their whole future life. Even from an enemy it is lawful to learn. L.

## HOME MISSIONS.—SAULT STE. MARIE AND VICINITY.

MR. EDITOR,—With your permission I give a few items concerning the mission station and mission work at Sault Ste. Marie and vicinity. As is known to many of your readers this station was taken up many years ago by the Knox College Missionary Society. Here the late Rev. Mr. Rennelson, Rev. Mr. McKerracher, now of Prince Arthur's Landing and the Rev. Mr. McKechnie laboured during their student life. Their memories are fragrant still. For the last four or five years this station has been under the watchful and fostering care of the Home Mission Committee; and during that period has been supplied almost uninterruptedly by ordained missionaries.

The growth of the station has been, and still is, discouragingly slow; and down to the present it is but 'the day of small things.' Our town suffers much from a fluctuating population. The fact, too, that here we have four different denominations, each with a pastor, goes a great way to have each of them weak and struggling. Moreover, being so contiguous to American territory, where it is said there are more inducements for settlers and tradesmen, tends to drain our population, and to turn aside intending Canadian settlers.

There are, however, some indications of advancement in the history of the mission. In the summer of 1876 the small band of worshippers resolved to build a place of worship. The contract was let forthwith; and a fine and commodious edifice was completed, and formally dedicated for the public worship of God in July last. It is a neat frame building, Gothic, capable of seating 200 comfortably. A few who subscribed towards the Building Fund are not now in the place; others promised help which thus far has not been forthcoming, and some for reasons better known to themselves have withdrawn their subscriptions. And thus a heavy debt rests upon the new building. Since last May the sum of \$300 have been paid on this debt, and there still remains \$870 to be paid at the rate of \$388 per annum. During the present year Messrs. Brown and Wilson have borne this burden almost alone.

Services are held in town every Sabbath at 11 a. m. and 7 p. m.; and the country is regularly supplied almost every Sabbath afternoon. In the country our people are for the most part confined to Korah township; but lately settlements are taking place around Point Aux Pins, in Prince and Pennifather townships and other districts. The people are very much scattered and consequently much travel and pastoral visiting are necessary. In addition to the Sault and its necessity, there is ample scope for, and much need of missionary work in districts lying far beyond the Sault. In the district lying along the north shore, from the Great Manitoulin to Prince Arthur's Landing (about 600 miles), I am the lone representative—clerical I mean—of our beloved Church. Through this district I have extended my labours to thirty miles above and sixty miles below Sault Ste. Marie. A few weeks ago I set off on a missionary tour thirty miles up Lake Superior coast. After crossing Goulai's Bay and driving up the Goulai River for some distance I found Mr. Wm. McDonald—a worthy Presbyterian of Dr. McKay's congregation, Puslinch—who has a large lumbering interest here.

Mr. McDonald kindly sent word to all the settlers in the district, being three all told; the mill hands were all gathered and divine service held. Next day I went into the woods to the camp, and through Mr. McDonald's kindness had the privilege of preaching the everlasting Gospel to the men in the camps immediately after dinner. Returning the same evening I preached again at the mills and dispensed the ordinance of baptism. I preached to about forty souls in all who had never heard the Gospel in these regions. The kindness of Mr. McDonald and that of Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler will not be forgotten.

Fifteen days ago I set out to visit some of those destitute of Gospel ordinances to the east. St. Joseph Island, the Bruce mines, and the townships of Lefroy and Plummier were visited. St. Joseph Island is twenty miles long by about eleven miles wide. It lies between the Bruce mines and Sault Ste. Marie, but at one point quite near the former. It is said to have a

population of nearly two thousand. Owing to a great snow storm I was prevented from penetrating into the interior, and had to content myself with coasting around on snow shoes (for I had to abandon my sleigh and leave my steed to plunge through the deep snows of Bear and Mud lakes as best he could). However I was enabled to preach at Richards' Landing, at Fort Massey (called after that of Halifax) and at Hilton or Marksville. I have it from those who ought to know, that our people are in the majority on the Island.

At the Bruce mines I preached twice. Here our people are in the minority. But even here I visited six or seven families in a few hours. But beyond doubt the most interesting section visited by me is that between Otter-Tail and Desert Lakes (about ten miles from 'The Bruer') It is nearly all Presbyterian. Three hours after my arrival and without previous notice a houseful was gathered and divine service held.

They assured me that from a certain centre and within a radius of five miles fifty Presbyterian families could be gathered. I threw out the hint that they should build a church. They said they would begin at once if I would visit them occasionally or send them a missionary. I hope by the time this will appear before the public Knox College Missionary Society or the Home Mission Committee may have a missionary set apart for this needy and extensive field. Leaving this locality I proceeded nine miles onward to "Stobbie's mine" arriving in time to preach to the miners at 7 p. m. The next morning I turned homewards. I shall not soon forget the pleasures of this missionary tour. It had its difficulties too. On one occasion after weary tramping over Mud Lake my guide (son of Major Thompson of Halifax) and myself sat down with gratitude to a dish of potatoes and porcupine. With hunger for sauce it was not at all bristly fare.

J. R. MCLEOD.

Sault Ste. Marie, Algoma, March 14th, 1879.

## UNION OF COLLEGES.

MR. EDITOR,—In the "Record" for this month, we have an interesting illustration of the benefits of the union of the various branches of the Presbyterian Church into one Church. This is shown in the first article. There we see the union carried out in reality.

In many places where there were two small struggling congregations of Presbyterians belonging to different sections of the Church before the union they are united into one strong congregation. The ministers in many of these places, resigned their charges, to make way for union. This was noble self-denial on their part. They have not in any case suffered by being disinterested, as far as known to me. The Head of the Church has called them mostly, to wider spheres of usefulness.

Those congregations have been all strengthened. Then the ministers set free have been called to other spheres of usefulness; and the working power of the Church by this means considerably increased. The Church has been benefited by this fruit of our happy union.

But why should not this principle of union, be carried farther; and find another beautiful illustration in the case of our colleges. We have more college than are necessary for doing the Church's work; and more than the Church can support. These are matters about which we need not hesitate to speak or write, they are spoken of freely in private, and must sooner or later come to the surface; and the sooner the better.

The colleges are mostly in debt, and great efforts are necessary to raise the funds required for their buildings and their support. Then why not carry out the union principle, and have two, if not three of these institutions united. Great benefits would result from such a union.

The college power would be strengthened, just as in the case of the congregations so happily united. The number of professors would be increased, while some of the present professors would be, perhaps set free for pastoral work. Then any one of the colleges, with some addition to the staff of teachers could easily teach three times the number of students attending any of the colleges at present. The expenses would be greatly lessened, and the work as well, if not better executed. The great pressure for raising funds would not be necessary, and the college committees and the whole Church relieved from much anxiety on behalf of the college funds. The Church would then be at liberty to turn her energies and the funds saved by this