

## PASTORAL LETTER

Of the Archbishops and Bishops of the Province of Quebec.

The following is the Pastoral letter of the Archbishop and Bishops of this Province read at the Roman Catholic Church on Sunday:

We, by the grace of God and favor of the Apostolic See, Archbishop and Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Provinces of Quebec, Montreal and Ottawa,

To the Secular and Regular Clergy, and to all the faithful of our respective dioceses, health and benediction in our Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN—Called by the will of our Divine Lord to the spiritual government of the particular churches confided to their care, the Bishops, successors of the Apostles, have not only the mission to teach truth at all times and to infuse salutary principles into the souls of men, but they have, moreover, in certain critical and perilous circumstances, the right, and it is their duty to raise their voices to forewarn the faithful of dangers that threaten their faith, and to direct, stimulate, and sustain them in the just vindication of their imprescriptible rights, manifestly disregarded and violated.

You know, dearly beloved brethren, the very painful position in which our co-religionists of Manitoba have been placed by the unjust laws which deprived them, six years ago, of the separate school system, which, in virtue of the Constitution of the country, they enjoyed till then—a school system so important, so necessary for a mixed population, for a healthy education and for the formation of children in the principles of the Catholic faith, which is, on earth, our greatest treasure and most precious inheritance.

We stood not in need of the decisions of civil tribunals, dearly beloved brethren, to see the injustice of these Manitoba laws, these attacks on liberty and justice, still, it has pleased Divine Providence, in His wisdom and goodness, to obtain for Catholics the legal support of an unexceptional and sovereign authority in the recognition by the highest tribunal of the Empire, of the legitimacy of their rights and the legality of a Federal remedial measure.

In view of these facts, the Canadian Episcopate, solicitous above all for the interests of religion and the good of souls, could not dissimulate the gravity of the duty which was imposed on their pastoral solicitude, and which obliged them to claim justice as they have done.

For, since the Bishops, whose authority is from God himself, are the natural judges of questions concerning Christian faith, religion and morals; since they are the recognized heads of a perfect society, sovereign and superior by its nature and its end to civil society, it belongs to them, when circumstances require it, not only to express unequivocally their views and their desires in every religious matter, but to point out to the faithful, or approve of suitable means to arrive at the spiritual end they have in view. This is the doctrine of the great Pope Leo XIII. in his Encyclical *Immortale Dei*: "All that is sacred in human affairs, under any title whatever, all that regards the end in view, all such falls under the jurisdiction and authority of the Church."

We deem it of importance, dearly beloved brethren, to remind you briefly of these inherent principles in the constitution of the Church itself, these essential rights of religious authority, in order to justify the attitude taken by the members of the Catholic Hierarchy in the present school question, and to explain more fully the obligations under which the faithful are of following episcopal directions.

If there are, in fact, circumstances in which Catholics ought to manifest openly towards the Church all the respect and devotedness to which she is entitled, it is surely in a crisis such as the present, when the highest interests of faith and justice are at stake, demanding on the part of all good men a united and firm front under the direction of their leaders.

We had hopes, dearly beloved brethren, that the last session of the Federal Parliament would bring to a termination the school difficulties which so widely divide men's minds; we have been deceived in these hopes. History itself will judge of the causes which impeded the long-expected solution.

As for us, who have in view only the triumph of the eternal principles of religion and justice confided to our care, we, whom no defeat will ever be able to dishearten or turn aside from the accomplishment of the divine mission which was that of the Apostles themselves, feel, in the presence of the electoral struggle about to take place, that an imperative duty is incumbent on us; this duty is to indicate to all the faithful under our jurisdiction, and whose consciences we have to direct, the only line of conduct to be followed in the present elections.

Should we, first of all, remind you, dearly beloved brethren, how noble and important is the right bestowed upon you by the Constitution in designating for office the depositaries of public power? Every citizen worthy of the name, every Canadian who loves his country, who wishes it to be great, peaceful and prosperous, should interest himself in its government.

Now, the government of our country—a people still young, but capable of occupying a distinguished place among the nations, will be what you will make it yourselves by your choice and by your votes.

That is to say, dearly beloved brethren, as a general rule, and save rare exceptions—it is a duty of conscience for every citizen to vote; a duty all the more grave and pressing as the questions disputed are important and may exercise over your destinies an influence more or less decisive.

That is to say, again, you should vote as honest, wise, enlightened and intelligent Christians.

Avoid then, dearly beloved brethren, the deplorable excesses against which we frequently warned you; perjury, intemperance, lying, calumny, violence

and party spirit, which warp the judgment and produce a kind of voluntary obstinate blindness.

Do not sell your vote. To vote is a duty, and duty is not sold. Give not your vote to the first comer, but to him whom in conscience you judge the best qualified by his mental powers, firmness of character and his moral principles to fill the noble office of legislator.

And that this judgment may be surer, and more enlightened, far not the criticisms of a newspaper or the opinions of a friend who would hamper your mind; consult when necessary, before voting, persons who by their instruction, their rank or their social standing are best qualified to judge of the questions that are agitated, and to appreciate the relative value of the candidates who ask your suffrage.

These are, dearly beloved brethren, general principles of wisdom and Christian prudence that apply to all times and to all elections in which the laws of the country permit you to take part.

But, in the present circumstances, the duty of Canadian electors, principally Catholic electors, is invested with a character of special importance, to whose gravity we desire to call your attention in a special manner. A grave injustice was committed against the Catholic minority in Manitoba.

They were deprived of their Catholic separate schools, and forced to send their children to schools that their consciences condemn. The Privy Council of England recognized the justice of the Catholic claim, and the right of the Federal authorities to interfere, in order that justice be done to the oppressed. It is a question then for the Catholics of our country, and well-meaning Protestants, to unite their strength and their suffrages, to secure a final victory for the rights secured by the Constitution. The means to secure this end is to elect, as representatives of the people, only men sincerely resolved to favor with all their influence and to sustain in Parliament a measure to remedy the evils from which the Manitoba minority suffers. In speaking to you thus, dearly beloved brethren, our intention is not to bind ourselves to any of the parties that are combating in the political arena; on the contrary, we desire to preserve our liberty. The Manitoba school question being, before all, a religious question, intimately allied to the deepest interests of the Catholic faith in this country, to the natural rights of parents and also to the respect due to the Constitution of the country and to the British Crown, we would regard it as betraying a sacred cause, of which we are, and ought to be, the defenders if we did not use our authority to secure its success.

Remark, dearly beloved brethren, that a Catholic is not permitted, in whatever position he may be—a journalist, an elector, a candidate or a representative, to have two lines of conduct in religious questions, one for private, and the other for public life, to trample under foot, in the exercise of his social duties, the obligations imposed on him as a submissive child of the Church. This is why our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII. in his Encyclical *Libertas praesentissimum*, condemns those who "pretend that in all that concerns the government of human society, its institutions, moral laws, public functions, the institution of youth, no more attention is to be paid to the Church than if she did not exist. For the same reason he says, elsewhere (Encyclical *Immortale Dei*): "Before all it is necessary that all Catholics, worthy of the name, determine to be, and show themselves devoted, sons of the Church; that they repulse, without hesitation, all that would be incompatible with this profession; that they make use of public institutions, as far as they can, in conscience, for the furtherance of truth and justice."

Therefore, dearly beloved brethren, all Catholics should support only those candidates who bind themselves formally and solemnly to vote, in Parliament in favor of legislation which will restore to the Catholic minority of Manitoba the school rights to which they are entitled by the decision of the Hon. Privy Council of England. This grave duty is incumbent on every good Catholic, and you would not be justified, either before your spiritual guides, nor before God himself, by neglecting this obligation.

Until now we could congratulate ourselves on having the sympathetic support of a great number of our separated brethren who understood that, in a country such as ours, having different religions, it is necessary for the general good to make use of this broadness of view which respects liberty of conscience and acquired right. We appeal again to their spirit of justice and patriotism, so that, joining their influence to that of Catholics, they may aid them to redress the grievances of which our co-religionists so justly complain.

What we want is the triumph of right and justice, the re-establishment of the rights and privileges of our Manitoba brethren, the Roman Catholic minority, in educational matters, so as to shelter them from arbitrary and unjust legislation.

We rely in this matter, dearly beloved brethren, on your spirit of faith and obedience.

We are convinced that, submissive in mind and heart to the teaching of your chief pastors, you will know how, if called upon, to place above your personal opinions and feelings the interests of a cause which excels all others—that of justice, order and harmony in the different classes which compose the great Canadian family.

Done and signed at Montreal, on the sixth day of May, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-six.

The pastoral bears the names of: † Edward Charles, Archbishop of Montreal; † J. Thomas, Archbishop of Ottawa; † L. N., Archbishop of Cyrène, Administrator of Quebec; † L. F., Bishop of The Rivers; † L. N., Bishop of St. Hyacinthe; † N. Zephirin, Bishop of Oxythere, Vicar Apostolic of Pontiac; † Elphage, Bishop of Nicolet; † André Albert, Bishop of St. Germain of Limousin; † Michel Thomas, Bishop of Chouin; † Joseph Mechal, Bishop of Valleyfield; † Paul, Bishop of Sherbrooke; † M. X., Bishop of Drummond, coadjutor to the Bishop of St. Hyacinthe.

## A CIRCULAR LETTER

The above mandement is accompanied by a circular letter to the clergy of the

dioceses. This document shows the importance given to the school question by the Bishops, and to the directions given in their mandement.

"The clergy are enjoined to read this mandement in all the parochial churches on the first Sunday after its reception, and on the Sunday preceding the polling day. Moreover, the reading of this mandement will take the place of any other circular usually read during election time. It is to be hoped that the clergy will be the first to show a prudent example and submission in so solemn an occasion."

"To insure the union and the triumph of the sacred cause of Catholic instruction, the Archbishops and Bishops clearly indicate the means they recommend: We ask, and we have the right to demand, that every member of the clergy, who on the day of his ordination has promised respect and obedience to his Bishop, should have only one heart and one voice to claim with us the remedy for the grievances of the minority of Manitoba by the means recommended by the Episcopate, that is to say, by a Remedial Bill."

"Nothing is more appropriate to the existing circumstances than those wise words of our Sovereign Pontiff Leo XIII.:—The authority of the Bishops must be sacred to the clergy, and they must know that their ministry, if not exercised under the direction of the Bishops, will not be either holy, fully useful or honored."

"The Bishops recommend also perfect union between Catholics. Consequently, dear brethren, we instantly pray you, and we even command you, not to say anything that could be against the teaching of the Episcopate; but, on the contrary, when you will be consulted, answer according to the meaning and the desire of those appointed by God to govern the religious society, and who work in a common spirit for the triumph of faith, justice and social order."

The letter ends by asking the clergy to pray in order to obtain from the Almighty enlightenment for all those who will take part in the next elections—candidates, electors, and others entrusted with the care of having the law respected, in order that, with the blessing of God, the greatest spiritual and temporal good of our dear country be the result. This circular bears the signature of all the Bishops who signed the letter.

## QUEBEC'S SCHOOL LAW.

(From the Montreal Gazette.)

The report on education of the Presbytery Synod of Montreal and Ottawa after referring to the dispute over the municipality of St. Gregoire le Thaumaturge, goes on to say that there now seems nothing to be done but to proclaim the case as an instance of that liberality which the majority boasts at the present time characterizes its action towards the minority. This, of course, is said in sarcasm, and is to be interpreted contrary to the text. It is to be regretted that a body of so high traditions as at the Synod of a Presbytery Church should have given its sanction to a statement that, speaking plainly, does not represent the facts. The case of St. Gregoire le Thaumaturge is a peculiar one. The parish covered a part of several municipalities, and when it was erected into a school municipality, these parts were taken into the new district. The process was regular. The action was necessary for the convenience of the majority of the people in the area affected. The law was observed. All the formalities were gone through. The interested parties were notified as the code directs. Nevertheless, the action was felt to be a grievance, in that it took away some of the territory of the Montreal Protestant School Commissioners, and some of their revenue. It was a case where a law designed to be fair, and that in its general operation is fair, brought about an inconvenience. That inconvenience, however, need not last a day longer than the Protestant inhabitants of the affected territory choose. Indeed, it is understood that the notices have been given that will terminate it at the close of the school year, on June 20. It is in representing the conditions complained of as being permanent and unalterable that the Synod report errs. There are several ways in which the Protestants of St. Gregoire le Thaumaturge may legally free themselves of the burden of paying taxes for the support of the public school of the regularly constituted municipality in which they reside or hold property. They may, under sections 1985-1986 of the Revised Statutes, unite and form a dissentient school municipality, and establish a school of their own, which will receive a share of the provincial grant, and to which they will pay their taxes and send their children. Or they may, under section 1989, unite with a neighboring school municipality of their religious faith (Montreal for instance), situated at a short distance from their own, either completely or only for the purpose of sending their children to school. In either case the taxes go to the school municipality which the children attend. Further provision is made in the same direction in clause 1993, which enacts that where there is no dissentient school in a municipality "it shall be lawful for any resident head of a family professing the religious faith of the minority of the said municipality, and having children of school age, to declare, in writing to the Chairman of the School Commissioners, that he intends to support a school in a neighboring municipality." And if this is done, even by one Protestant ratepayer, the law conveys his taxes to the school to which he decides to send his children, which school is bound to receive them. There are, therefore, three courses open to the Protestants of St. Gregoire le Thaumaturge by which they may free themselves from the payment of taxes to the public school. They are all simple. If none of them have been taken before this, it is the fault only of the interested parties, and neither the law nor the majority of Quebec is to be blamed for the fact. The law of Quebec is absolutely fair. It assumes that the people of a municipality are all supporters of the public schools. These schools may be either French or English. The majority decides that. Then if anyone desires to dissent, the law provides the means

There are Roman Catholic dissentient schools in Protestant localities, as well as Protestant dissentient schools in Roman Catholic localities. There are Roman Catholic ratepayers who contribute their taxes to the support of schools under Protestant control, as well as Protestants who pay to schools managed by Roman Catholics. And it is perfectly right that this should be the case. When the State undertakes to provide means of education for the children, it is in the interest of the State, and every member of the State is rightly taxed for the cost. No one should escape his share of a contribution for the public benefit because he disagrees with his neighbors as to the interpretation of a text of scripture. If the majority in Manitoba would adopt the Quebec law in the governing of the schools of that Province the Manitoba minority would cease to have a grievance, and the country would have peace.

## ENGLAND NOW.

A DECLARATION FROM THE BISHOPS ON THE EDUCATIONAL BILL.

THEY APPROVE OF IT IN A CERTAIN DEGREE, MR. DILLON AND THE IRISH PARTY REFERRED TO IN COMPLIMENTARY TERMS—SOME OF THE DEFECTS OF THE BILL.

The Bishops of England, headed by Cardinal Vaughan, have issued an important declaration on Catholic education. They say:

The education bill now before Parliament has our good will and approval, because it proposes to recognize by statute voluntary and Christian schools as an integral part of the national system of elementary education. It embodies a Christian principle which, as Catholic Bishops, we must ever assert and maintain. That principle is that Christian parents possess an indefeasible natural right to have their children taught catechetically by approved teachers the definite doctrines of Christian faith and morals. Christianity itself in this country has been imperilled by men who, in violation of this right, are bent upon forcing the whole of our child population into their narrow system of education. This danger has rendered the statutory recognition of the law of nature upon this subject imperative and urgent.

## THE BILL'S DEFECTS.

We proceed to point out two main defects of the present bill, and to claim that they shall be made good.

1. The bill does not provide for the establishment of new denominational schools in places where these may be deemed to be what has been technically termed "unnecessary." As we have shown, Catholic schools are always "necessary" in the ordinary sense of that word to Catholic parents, because education in such schools is the only education which they approve. We must, therefore, press for the introduction into the bill of a clause similar to the clause in section 67 of the Education (Scotland) Act of 1872, whereby no new school shall be deemed unnecessary which provides accommodation for children in places where no provision exists, regard being had to the religious beliefs of the parents.

2. The bill still leaves denominational schools at a very great disadvantage, as compared with board schools, in respect of "maintenance." The bill should also be amended in certain other particulars to make it, in our opinion, a satisfactory measure. These amendments will be taken charge of by the chairman of the Catholic school committee and a number of experienced gentlemen and members of Parliament, whom we have invited to watch the bill on behalf of the Catholic community as it passes through Parliament.

Finally we record with much satisfaction that Mr. Dillon and the Irish Catholic members, so large a number of whose co-religionists in England are of Irish parentage, have heartily promised their parliamentary support to the needful amendments. With their able assistance we trust that the bill may be passed in such a shape as to secure the fullest measure of justice to all concerned.

## ITALIAN WAREHOUSE.

A BEAUTIFUL CATALOGUE ISSUED BY THIS FIRM—THEIR WINE VAULTS.

For the convenience of their numerous customers, Messrs. Fraser, Viger & Co., the well-known Italian Warehousemen on St. James street, have just issued an illustrated price list and catalogue of some many lines of goods. It comprises some 120 pages of matter, is printed on fine litho. paper, and is suitably bound. It is executed in colored inks—blue, black, red, black and brown—and these colors are so arranged as to produce a very neat appearance. The several lines of goods are well classified, and an index enables any particular article to be found without the least delay, and its cost at once noted. The lines include a vast number of wines (still and sparkling), spirits, liqueurs and cordials, medicated wines, ales, stout, mineral waters, ciders, and lime juice. Then, of course, there are teas, coffees, farinaceous goods, foreign and domestic cheese, hams, bacon, biscuits, flavoring extracts, fish (in tins and glass), soups (in cans), extracts of meat, canned meats and poultry, fruits, nuts, etc. The printing is very neatly done, the matter is well arranged, and the catalogue will undoubtedly be appreciated by those for whom it is intended.

It may be mentioned, en passant, that Messrs. Fraser, Viger & Co. have, in consequence of the increased trade in wines, spirits, etc., found it necessary to secure larger storage accommodation, and since May last they have been occupying the five large sub-vaults that extend from Fortification Lane to the curbstone of St. James street, whilst in the other direction they run from the Merchants Bank to Alexander's confectionery. These vaults date away back in the forties, and were at one time occupied by a firm of brewers. They are undoubtedly amongst the finest in Canada, and as a place for storing wines, etc., are not equaled in the Dominion.

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