

LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF
THE GREAT GERMAN COLONY

Muenster, Sask., March 16, '05.
To the Hon. A. J. Adamson, M. P.
House of Commons, Ottawa.

As the Northwest Territories of the Dominion of Canada are about to be erected into Provinces and there appears to be a disputed question as to whether the principle of granting separate schools should be embodied in the constitutions of the new Provinces to be formed. I, as the head and representative of St. Peter's Colony, numbering about three thousand souls, located in Humbolt district, Saskatchewan, petition you as the representative of our district, Saskatchewan to vote and use your influence to secure for our new Provinces the Constitutional right of establishing separate schools.

We hold that education embraces something more than mere cultivation of the intellectual faculties, more than mere instruction in the branches of worldly knowledge. We believe that education should include also instruction in religion, inculcation of morals, and the formation of the heart. We regard the teaching of morals and religion and the training of the heart as the spirit and essence of all education. Without religious instruction and moral training, we are convinced our children will not gain their temporal and eternal destiny, will not become worthy citizens of the Dominion of Canada, or ultimate citizens of the kingdom of Heaven.

We cannot therefore approve of a system of education which ignores God, which is divorced from religion, which is not based on Christian and moral principles. The assertion that sufficient religious instruction and moral culture can be imparted to children in our so-called Sunday schools appears to us absurd. We believe that Sunday schools although good in themselves, are entirely inadequate. It cannot be expected that in one hour's Sunday school instruction as much can be accomplished as in five days' attendance at school during the week. Sunday schools may, at best, impart a smattering of religious knowledge. By attending one hour's religious instruction in a week, children cannot possibly acquire a thorough and sufficient knowledge of their duties towards God, their neighbour, and themselves.

Churches are, moreover, especially in this new country, few and far between. Very many children reside at great distances from church, and are not able to attend Sunday school, especially during the cold winter season. Unless provision is made to impart to these children religious instruction in school, they will be deprived of all religious instruction and grow up more like pagans than Christians.

Nor can we agree with those who propose as a substitute for religious instruction in school the teaching of religion to children at home by their parents. Although it is a natural duty of parents to look after the physical, moral and religious welfare of their children, yet it is preposterous to assert that this threefold welfare of the child should be attended to only under the parental roof, and not in school. However solicitous parents may be to impart to their children religious instruction and to fashion their characters, hearts and consciences at home, they will, as a rule, not achieve great results, unless their efforts are seconded by the teacher in school. Their home instructions can at any rate never be a sufficient substitute for the teaching of morals and religion at school. But only too many parents are not competent to impart religious instruction, do not possess the necessary knowledge, time, tact and patience to teach their children the lessons of Christian doctrine and religious practices. Unless the children of such parents receive their religious instruction and moral training at school, they must grow up wild like the trees in the forest.

But Christian training, inculcation of morals, which are essential elements of education, cannot be introduced into our public schools on account of the different religious convictions of our mixed populations. Hence the importance and necessity of granting separate schools to such religious denominations as wish to bring up their children in the doctrines and practices of their church, as are solicitous to impart to their children a Christian education.

Unless the Canadian Government will grant such separate schools, our Catholic people shall be compelled, through conscientious motives, to erect and maintain private schools, at their own expense, as they have been doing for a great number of years in the United States, and at the same time bear their share of the taxation imposed for the support of the public schools. Such double taxation for school purposes, for

conscience sake, we regard, however as rank of injustice.

The Government of the Northwest Territories has thus far granted to Protestants as well as to Catholics the right of establishing separate schools. For the past thirty years this right has been enjoyed by both denominations without any interference or molestation. We can perceive no reason why this fair and just principle should now not be safeguarded by adopting it in the autonomy bill. It would thus be secured to the new Provinces in perpetuity. If the solution of the school question should be left to the legislatures of the future Provinces, it will likely always remain a bone of contention, the cause of strife and animosity between the friends and enemies of the separate schools.

By embodying the principle of separate schools in the constitution of the new Provinces, no injury is committed. Both Protestants and Catholics are thereby but guaranteed forever their vested rights. In districts where Catholics may be in the majority, Protestants can avail themselves of the right of establishing their separate schools. Should they, however, not wish to take advantage of this right, they would certainly have no valid reason to object to Catholics making use of their right of erecting and supporting their denominational schools, though not contributing to the support of the public schools to which they cannot conscientiously send their children.

In the name of your Catholic constituents of Humbolt district, therefore I respectfully request you to do what lies in your power to secure for our new Provinces the constitutional right of establishing separate schools, whereby equal rights would be permanently guaranteed to Protestants as well as to Catholics in the matter of Christian education.

Yours very sincerely,
ALFRED MEYER, O.S.B.
Prior St. Peter's Monastery.

Regina Notes.

St. Patrick's Day was duly celebrated by High Mass at ten o'clock, when a practical and most instructive sermon was given to quite a large congregation by Rev. Father Suaff, O.M.I. In the afternoon the pupils of Gratton School gave an entertainment. It was given by the senior pupils, and the scholars of all classes with their teachers attended in the Principal's room. In the evening a very successful concert under the auspices of the Women's Altar Society was given in the City Hall. The numbers were all well selected and well rendered. We cannot refrain, however, from special mention of a few. Mrs. Rimmer, as pianist, and in a solo, won the praise of all who heard her. Mrs. Rimmer's most agreeable personality makes her a very desirable acquisition to any entertainment or function. Her pianoforte duet with Miss Seymour was highly appreciated. The violin solo by Miss Seymour and Mr. Leubach was simply grand. Mr. Leubach is a professional musician, and Miss Seymour certainly knows how to handle her violin bow with grace and credit to herself and her instructors. Miss Seymour's stage appearance was very prepossessing, and met with many laudatory comments from the audience—"Kathleen Mavourneen" by Miss Seymour with violin obligato was given with much effect and received well deserved encore. The ladies netted a good sum to assist in the building of the Church. The Committee in charge of the Concert will take credit to themselves, Mrs. C. J. McCusker, the prime worker on the Committee was indefatigable in her efforts and spared no pains to make it a success. Most beautiful weather prevails. Services are held every Wednesday and Friday evening during Lent—the attendance is very large.

GENA MACFARLANE

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A FEW POINTERS

On arrival at Winnipeg the wisest policy for any new settler to adopt is to remain in Winnipeg for a few days and learn for himself all about the lands offered for sale and to homestead.

There are districts that have been settled for many years in which land can be purchased. Some of this may be unbroken prairie which still possesses all the richness and productive powers of our virgin prairies. Other lands, cultivated and having comfortable farm buildings, are ready for immediate possession.

There are Provincial Government lands, Dominion Government homesteads, and railway lands to be secured.

The price of land varies from \$3 to \$40 per acre.

Location with respect to railways, towns, timber and water determines the price of land.

For information regarding homesteads apply at the Dominion Land Office.

For purchase of Provincial lands apply at the Provincial Land Office in the Parliament Buildings.

For C. P. R. or C. N. R. lands apply at the land offices of said railway companies.

For lands owned by private individuals apply to the various real estate agents in the city.

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