

Manitoba's refusal to the terms of the remedial order.

In a controversy as grave as this it is of the utmost importance that the position of each party should be clearly defined, but this is just what is lacking at present. The remedial order requires the Provincial Government to restore to the appellants certain rights, viz:—

(a) "The right to build, maintain, equip, manage, conduct and support Roman Catholic schools in the manner provided for by the said statutes, which were repealed by the two acts of 1890."

(b) "The right to share proportionately in any grant made out of the public funds for the purposes of education."

(c) "The right of exemption of such Roman Catholics as contribute to Roman Catholic schools, from all payment or contribution to the support of any other schools."

This order has thus far remained unrisced and unamended and it makes no allusion to any compromise but requires, as is seen in these extracts, the restoration of the Roman Catholic schools to the condition in which they were before 1890. The Provincial Government has interpreted it in this plain literal sense. It recognizes no alternative between restoring a complete system of separate schools such as existed six years ago, and an unmodified refusal to obey the remedial order—of these two it chooses the latter. And if its interpretation of the attitude of the Federal Government is correct, then its answer is undoubtedly right and is indeed the only answer that can be given. Such separate schools as Manitoba had before 1890 were a disgrace and the proposal to restore them is intolerable—the teachers were not qualified, the alleged course of study was a travesty on education, there was no adequate inspection and the management of funds by the central board was, to say the least, peculiar. The restoration of such schools is out of the question and indeed it is doubtful if anybody outside a section of the Roman Catholic priesthood and a little band of their followers would welcome a return to such schools.

But is the interpretation placed by the Provincial Government of Manitoba on the action of the Dominion Cabinet warranted? It is true the remedial order itself contains no suggestion of compromise but members of the Cabinet and newspapers which express their views are on record as repeatedly voicing the hope that the "grievance" of the minority might be removed by some conciliatory action on the part of the Provincial legislation and that it might not be necessary to follow up the remedial order by further legislation—Such conciliatory action could only be of the nature of a compromise. Let it be granted that the Dominion Government if it sought a conciliatory basis of settlement, took an extraordinary way to bring it about by issuing its pre-emptory order in Council. Perhaps the government will even yet have the grace to say that it has made a mistake. But on the other hand it is a pity that the Provincial government of Manitoba in its recent deliverance should base its reply solely on the literal form of the remedial order and leave out of account the mass of material suggestive of conciliation which was less directly but no less assuredly before its numbers. It is doubly unfortunate that a fortnight or so before the issue of the recent communication there should have been an interview between Mr. Laurier and Attorney General Sifton of Manitoba who seems to be the real leader of the Manitoba government on this question. It is of little consequence which of the two it was who asked for the interview. This question should be kept as intirely as possible out

of the field of party politics and the rulers of Manitoba cannot be too careful in letting it be seen that in this question of principle they are not in collusion with anybody and will not consciously allow themselves to be used to advance or retard the interests of any of the managers of "the machine."

White-winged Peace.

If not with the promptitude that might be expected, at least with the deliberation that carries weight have the churches and the Christian public registered their conviction with respect to the Venezuelan trouble. It has just been announced that the Evangelical Alliance at New York has passed a resolution, upon the suggestion of the British Alliance calling upon all Christians in the United States to join the British Alliance in prayer that in the relations of their respective governments pacific counsels may prevail. The day set apart was yesterday. This drawing near to each other of the Christian people in both countries is most seemly and fitted to bring about desirable results. As Christians the British do not meddle with United States politics or commerce, but in the interests of peace between kindred peoples they are entitled to speak and their appeal has been frankly answered. Canada might with advantage have followed suit. No doubt the action of the British Alliance includes Canada in its scope, but the Canadian brotherhood with the United States is strong. The prominent men in our churches are known and revered in the United States by the leaders of Christian thought there and representations from them would be very effective. Canada is doubly interested in the maintenance of good feeling and peace between the United States and Britain, for her territory would be the fighting ground and her boundary the line of attack in the conflict. The great conventions held within her borders of late years have brought Americans, in large numbers, to Canada and afforded them an opportunity of seeing the country, and knowing and respecting the inhabitants and laying the foundations of concord between them. Although the war "scare" has passed away the feeling excited by the President's message might yet be taken advantage of to bring the churches in Canada and in the United States nearer to one another by a message of peace from Canada.

An Esteemed Contemporary. The Canadian Baptist commences its 42nd volume with the current issue in a modernized and improved form. All the departments are well sustained and biographically the paper is much improved. If we have any criticism to make it is that the page is still a little too large, we would have preferred seeing it the same size as our own. We wish the Baptist a happy and successful year.

Week of Prayer. The meetings for prayer which are held this week by the several Evangelical Churches have been characterized by an earnestness and deep interest that is most gratifying. The threatening attitude of the great nations of the earth to each other, and the Armenian massacres are subjects of supplication at the Throne of Him whose footstool is the earth and in whose hand are the destinies of the peoples.

Hidden Text.

Through inadvertence the Hidden Text was omitted from our third issue in December. Those who are answering the questions may omit this and also refrain from answering the question appearing in the first issue in January.