

impossible in nature that oxygen combines with hydrogen, or that summer follows winter, we may be certain that such is God's will expressed in actual fact. If we find it written in every man's soul that children should honor their parents, or that "Thou shalt not steal," we have the right to conclude that such is God's will. Not all the applications of moral principles are thus written in the soul, for they vary; but the great basal principles of morals and duty are universal, therefore given of God. This is much. It includes all natural ethics. It can be developed into a full system of duty. But it is not clear that it ever would be thus developed into a lofty system of moral obligation unless we had some further way of learning God's will. In actual fact no high system of morals has ever been developed except under the faith of additional and special revelation from God. We have a Book which claims to contain such a revelation. It challenges investigation and demands proof. But when accepted, on reasonable evidence, it supplies an immensely important means to learn the will of God.

MANITOBA SCHOOL CASE.

THE most important event in Canadian ecclesiastical circles this week has been the encyclical on the Manitoba Schools. Naturally, the full text of the document has been looked for with much interest, but in this case the forecasts have fairly well disclosed the vital points of the utterance, and consequently what is really new, while interesting, is not unexpected. The statement taken as a whole is dignified and from the Roman Catholic standpoint, moderate. At the same time there is no lack of clearness in it as to where the Church stands on education, and it is highly desirable that Protestants should be informed of her position as declared by her supreme earthly head. Passing by, therefore, the introductory paragraphs in which compliments are bestowed on the Bishops. The first statement in point concerns the school law of 1890 which caused the whole trouble. As to the Pope's opinion of that Statute it is here given:

By this latter law a grave injury was inflicted, for it was not lawful for our children to seek the benefits of education in schools in which the Catholic religion is ignored, or actively combatted, in schools where its doctrine is despised and its fundamental principles repudiated. If the church has anywhere permitted this it was only with great reluctance and in self-defence, and after having taken many precautions, which, however, have too often been found unequal to carrying the danger. In like manner one must at all cost avoid, as most pernicious, those schools wherein every form of belief is indifferently admitted and placed on an equal footing—as if in what regards God and Divine things, it was of no importance whether one believed rightly or wrongly, whether one followed truth or falsehood. You well know, venerable brothers, that all schools of this kind have been condemned by the church, because there can be nothing more pernicious or more fitted to injure the integrity of faith and to turn away the tender minds of youth from the truth.

This extract also states the attitude of the Church as to Secular Schools.

The "Semperidem" of Roman-Catholicism the Pope re-affirms thus:

For the Catholic there is but one true religion, the Catholic religion; hence in all that concerns doctrine or morality or religion he cannot accept or recognize anything which is not drawn from the very sources of Catholic teaching. Justice and reason demand, then, that our children have in their schools not only scientific instruction but also moral teachings in harmony, as we have already said, with the principles of their religion, teachings without which all education will be not only fruitless but absolutely pernicious.

Hence the necessity of having Catholic teachers, reading books and text-books approved of by the Bishops,

and liberty to organize the schools, that the teaching therein shall be in full accord with Catholic faith as well as with all the duties that flow therefrom. For the rest, to decide in what institutions their children shall be instructed, who shall be their teachers of morality, is a right inherent to parental authority. When, then Catholics demand, and it is their duty to demand, and to strive to obtain, that the teaching of the masters shall be in conformity with the religion of their children, they are only making use of their right, and there can be nothing more unjust than to force on them the alternative of allowing their children to grow up in ignorance, or to expose them to manifest danger in what concerns the supreme interests of their souls. It is not right to call in doubt or to abandon in any way these principles of judging and acting which are founded on truth and justice, and which are the safeguards both of public and private interests.

The agitation of the hierarchy, the Pope, as was to have been expected, approves of in the following terms:—

Therefore, when the new law in Manitoba struck a blow at Catholic education, it was your duty, venerable brothers, to freely protest against the injury and disaster inflicted; and the way in which you all fulfilled that duty is a proof of your common vigilance, and of a spirit truly worthy of Bishops; and, although each one of you will find on this point a sufficient approbation in the testimony of his own conscience, learn, nevertheless, that you have also our conscience and our approbation, for the things which you sought and still seem to protect and defend are most sacred.

From the following paragraph the politicians of both parties have been drawing comfort, the Grits regarding it as conciliatory, the Tories as the reverse:—

The difficulties created by the law of which we speak by their very nature show that an alleviation was to be sought for in a united effort. For so worthy was the Catholic cause that all good and upright citizens, without distinction of party, should have banded themselves together in a close union to uphold it. Unfortunately for the success of this cause the contrary took place. What is more deplorable still is that Catholic Canadians themselves failed to unite as they should in defending those interests which are of such importance to all—the importance and gravity of which should have stilled the voice of party politics, which are of much less importance. We are not unaware that something has been done to amend that law. The men who are at the head of the Federal Government and of the Province of Manitoba have already taken certain measures with a view to decreasing the difficulties of which the Catholics of Manitoba complain, and against which they rightly continue to protest. We have no reason to doubt that these measures were taken from love of justice and from a laudable motive. We cannot, however, dissimulate the truth; the law which they have passed to repair the injury is defective, unsuitable, insufficient. The Catholics ask—and no one can deny that they justly ask—for much more. Moreover, in the remedial measures that have been proposed there is this defect, that in changes of local circumstances they may easily become valueless.

Here again, the spirit of compromise breaks out, yet the Bishops are left free to pursue their own course as to the means of remedying the alleged grievances:—

In a word, the rights of Catholics and the education of their children have not been sufficiently provided for in Manitoba. Everything in this question demands and is conformable to justice that they should be thoroughly provided for, that is, by placing in security and surrounding with due safeguards those unchangeable and sacred principles of which we have spoken above. This should be the aim, this the end to be zealously and prudently sought for. Nothing can be more injurious to the attainment of this end than discord; unity of spirit and harmony of action are most necessary. Nevertheless since, as frequently happens in things of this nature, there is not only