

And this blunder or crime of the first magnitude, according to Dr. Grant, has been enacted. In our humble way we agree with his opinion.

What is the grievance? It surely is not a grievance that a legislature alter, amend, or wholly do away with legislation which changed circumstances render no longer suitable or useful for the public interest. Would it not be a grievance of the very worst kind if this could not be done. This is what is claimed to be the case in Manitoba, and this is all that the Legislature did. Almost every change in legislation affects some portion of the community unfavorably, but the Legislature does not feel bound on that account to do nothing, to sacrifice the interests of the public at large for the interests of a minority which in this case is really quite small.

The grievance is not that if denied separate schools Roman Catholic children will not receive adequate instruction in the usual subjects of common school education. So far from that being the case, the Roman Catholics whose children now attend common schools never complain of that. Indeed, many, we are told, who now send their children to Separate schools, if they were at perfect liberty to choose would greatly prefer to send them to the common schools. This is said to be the feeling of many Manitobans even in whose name this legislation is invoked. That is not the grievance.

The grievance is not that the morals of their children will be corrupted if they are allowed to hear the Scriptures read, even out of the Douay version, or repeat with others the Lord's prayer, or learn to repeat the Decalogue, the foundation stone of all sound morality. A church which professes to found its claims and its doctrines upon the Word of God, cannot afford to declare that this is a grievance. Even if it held that such exercises as these conducted by Protestant teachers is a grievance, this is wholly removed by their children being allowed to retire during such exercises.

The grievance, then, is this: that according to Roman Catholic idea, the school is the nursery of the church, to be used largely to indoctrinate the minds of the young, at that susceptible time of life with the beliefs, doctrines, practices and claims of their church, and that by the recent legislation of Manitoba, and in the common school as we have it in Ontario and the United States, this cannot be done. This is the grievance that under a national system of common schools the peculiar doctrines of the Romish Church cannot be taught at the public expense. Can this be admitted to be really a grievance in a country and under a government which repudiates the connection of the church and state? We had considered that to be a well understood principle of our government for many years past. Have Roman Catholics and the Roman Catholic Church any rights inherent in them not in other churches and other citizens so that they can justly and honestly complain of it as a grievance, if the state refuses to use the public funds to teach in their schools the doctrines of their church, which it will not, and cannot employ to teach the doctrines of any other church? To ask the question is to answer it. This is no real grievance. If Roman Catholics choose to hold some particular opinion as to the object for which schools exist, they are at liberty to do so; but they have no right to insist that their fellow-citizens, very largely in the majority, should accept their view and guide the legislation of the country in accordance with it. If Roman Catholics have a right to public funds to be used for this purpose why have not others? And where is the stopping place?

We cannot see how, logically, Manitoba can give the remedial legislation, which it has in effect been commanded to give, either on the ground of the number of those who claim to be aggrieved, or of the religious opinions they hold. But the clear, cold logic of the intellect purely has often to be modified by the logic of circumstances, and by the fact pointed out by Principal Grant, that it is "men" we have to deal with. What remedy can be proposed if any to satisfy all parties would appear to be no easy matter. "The term *remedial*," says Principal Grant, "indicates a restoration of the state of things prior to 1890. But that state of things was intolerably bad. No one in a Manitoba constituency would venture to defend it. Every one in 1890 admitted that reform was needed, and that the Province had outgrown the Act of 1870." Yet a return to this state of things is what is asked for and which with unusual unanimity Manitobans by

legislation did away with. How can this with any decency be called a remedy.

State-building is slow work and requires infinite patience, wisdom, moderation and forbearance; it requires consideration for strong and apparently even unreasonable prejudices, ignorance and selfishness. Perhaps some way may be found out of this difficulty which shall tend to the public contentment. If any way is to be found to such a desirable end, Manitoba itself is surely much more likely to devise it, knowing best its own circumstances and needs, its own interest, than can the Dominion Parliament. We re-echo the last words of Principal Grant's conciliatory article, "Give Manitoba time." His view of the gravity of the situation will be agreed on by all sensible men: "If Ottawa interferes with Manitoba, its interference could also be invoked against Ontario. We would feel that such interference would be intolerable." The more grave the situation the greater is the necessity laid upon all wise and good citizens, Protestant or Roman Catholic, to shut their ears to passion and prejudice, and listen to the counsels of calmness and moderation.

W. F. M. S. AND MISSION FUNDS.

IT is evident from letters that appear in the papers, and other correspondence, that there is a considerable amount of misunderstanding as to the financial condition of the W. F. M. S., which is causing, in some quarters, a degree of hostility that cannot but prove disastrous, if not corrected. It is reported that the statement has been made at missionary meetings, and in pulpits, that the W. F. M. S. have more money than they know what to do with; that they last year lent Dr. Reid \$10,000 for the use of the General Foreign Mission Fund, and for which they are receiving 7 per cent. interest; that the W. F. M. S., is assuming the authority of a court of the church, dictating to congregations as to what they are to do with their funds, etc. Will you allow me to make the following statement in the name of the F. M. C.

1. The W. F. M. S. is an organization having a constitution sanctioned by the General Assembly, and the only thing they have ever done that looks like dictation is simply to attempt to carry out the terms of their Constitution. According to that Constitution all Auxiliaries are expected to contribute their collections to the funds of the W. F. M. S. If that is a wrong then the blame attaches to the General Assembly, and not to the Society.

2. The Foreign Mission Committee, when preparing estimates for the year, prepares estimates for the W. F. M. S., also, all of which are submitted to and adopted by the General Assembly. The ladies have loyally endeavored to meet the Assembly's demands, and in order to do so have had to seek the loyalty of all their Auxiliaries. Is it not rather unfortunate now, when or because they have succeeded in their efforts, that unkind and untrue charges should be made against them? They in no sense interfere with the administration of the funds; once the money is collected it is handed over to Dr. Reid, and the F. M. C. does all the rest.

3. The statement that they have more money than they know what to do with, and have lent Dr. Reid \$10,000, at 7 per cent. interest, is entirely wrong, and yet is just such a statement as is likely to do much harm. The fact is simply this: Dr. Reid borrows large sums of money from the banks every year to carry on the work until the Spring comes, when congregations send in their contributions. Of course, the interest on that borrowed money is so much loss. If our funds were a year ahead so that the treasury would not be exhausted until the next year's congregational contributions came in, all that interest could be saved. Now the contributions from the W. F. M. S. last Spring (1894) were sufficient to pay the previous year's account for work amongst women and children, and also to place in Dr. Reid's hands \$10,000 towards that same work on this year's account. It was not a loan to any other department of work. It was an advanced payment on *their own* work, and a saving of so much interest which would have been lost had it been necessary to go to the banks for that amount. Of course, that \$10,000 did not meet all expenditures on woman's work up to date. Dr. Reid has had to borrow a considerable amount

for that purpose for which interest is now being paid, not to the women, but to the banks. Hence, instead of ground of complaint in this, the real cause of regret is as has been stated, that all our committee's are not in a condition to avoid these bank loans, by being in funds to the full extent of their liabilities for the year. That is all there is in the charge of investing money at 7 per cent. There has been no loan and there has been no interest charged. To say that the W. F. M. S. has more money than they know what to do with, surely needs no reply. Are there not millions of women dying for time and eternity, because no one has sent them the Bread of Life? Is not the same cry from the Zenana prisons heard to-day, that was heard, when, and on account of which, the W. F. M. S. came into existence?

Surely anyone who will wittingly defeat or impair the efforts of these Christian women for the salvation of their sisters, is assuming a grave responsibility. The great enemy is no doubt eager for discord. Let us be as careful lest he gain an advantage over us. Is it too much to ask that before any person gives currency to these, or any other hurtful charges, that they correspond with someone who is in a position to say whether or not these things are so.

R. P. MACKAY,

Secretary F. M. Committee.

We gladly publish in our editorial columns the above communication from our Foreign Mission Secretary, first, because of the importance of the subject dealt with; second, because the Foreign Secretary speaks with the most perfect knowledge of the subject, and authoritatively in the name of the Foreign Mission Committee; and because it meets substantially every objection brought against the W. F. M. S. by "Querist," whose letter we publish in another column, on the principle that if there is any poisonous humor in the system, it is safer that it come to the outside than be allowed to fester within. If "Querist" and all who feel as he does, will, in addition to Mr. MacKay's, read Mrs. Blair's explanation there ought to be no further difficulty or fault-finding with the disposition of the funds by the W. F. M. S.

There are but one or two other points in "Querist's" letter to which we may refer in a word. He asks: "Has the W. F. M. S. any *right* to object if the ladies of a congregation combine both Home and Foreign interests when they try to raise funds?" The answer is plain. The women of any congregation are at perfect liberty to organize themselves in any way they choose to raise funds for any purpose whatever. But if in raising money for foreign missions, they wish to be in connection with the W. F. M. S. they can only do so by agreeing to observe its constitution, and if having entered into this connection they do not, the W. F. M. S. has not only a *right*, but it is their duty to call attention to this violation, and to insist upon abiding by the constitution, or withdrawal from the society. Suppose, for instance, that every one of the hundreds of auxiliaries composing the general W. F. M. S. were to insist upon doing as it liked with its funds, what would become of it? What confusion worse confounded would ensue? It must be allowed to have what is the right of every society, self-preservation. The reason why the Woman's Societies of the eastern section can give part of their money to Home Missions is that their constitution allows it, while that of the Western does not.

Some objections of "Querist" are obviously quite irrelevant. It may be quite true that home-life is being killed by mothers attending so many meetings. But what has the W. F. M. S. to do with that? It does not say how many or how few meetings mothers should attend, or whether they should attend any at all. The same may be said of the objection about country pastors. The W. F. M. S. has nothing to do with them. The Auxiliaries, the Presbyterian societies, and the General society have all shown that they are perfectly able to manage their own business without the aid of either country or city pastors, so that all they ask of pastors for the most part is simply to be let alone.

The Manchester Ship Canal which was opened a year ago with such eclat and royal pomp and ceremony is fast becoming a great Maritime highway. Three thousand vessels passed through it in the first year since its opening, and of these five hundred and one were foreign vessels bound to Manchester direct.