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Quebec: again
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in the name of all our members, to express
to you our earnest appreciation and deep
gratitude for the many favors which you
have extended to us, and for the helping hand
which you have given to the successful
organization of an institution devoted to the
cause of Christianity and higher education.
Respectfully yours,
Alfred H. Fleming,
Secretary Catholic Winter School of
America.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

A PLEASING sign of the times is the
interest which has been awakened in
Catholic literature. Three months
ago the enterprising firm of Benziger
Bros., New York City, issued a series
of Catholic novels—"Mr. Billy But-
tens," by Walter Lecky (81.25),
"Passing Shadows," by Anthony
York (81.25), "A Woman of For-
tune," by Christian Reid (81.25),
"The Vocation of Edward Conway,"
by M. F. Egan (81.25), "A Round
Table of the Representative American
Catholic Novelists." Short Stories.
(\$1.50)—and the demand for them
has been so great that a second
edition has now been printed.

A PRESS despatch from London (Eng.)
dated the 11th, states that "Wm.
Cook, a lad of seventeen, with a record
of four years in the Reformatory, was
convicted of robbery, and was handed
over by the court to a missionary,
with a view to sending him to Canada.
Judges here have been repeatedly not-
ified in this regard, and Sir Donald
Smith will again communicate with the
home office regarding these undesir-
able immigrants." How would it do
to have a little reciprocity in this mat-
ter? We have a number of young
and old persons in this Canada of ours
who are undesirable citizens, and it
would be a very good plan to send a
shipload of them to the mother country.
We could also supply a "missionary"
to accompany them, say, for in-
stance, the Rev. Mr. Madill.

information we
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ED AGAIN.

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RECOGNITION.

letter from the Secre-
Catholic Winter School of
eloquently to the
Hagan is doing for
and Catholic litera-
an set forth the scope
the Catholic Winter
in the pages of the
Catholic Review, the
Circle Review and
Extension Bulletin:

Ottawa, Nov. 8, 1896.
Rev. Arthur G. Gosselin,
Editor, Catholic Review,
I held last month, I was
to you by letter the school-
teachers for the valuable
and rendered our school,
ess assistance which you
brought towards the estab-
lishment of the Catholic Winter
School.

Permit me, then, dear

EDUCATION IN QUEBEC.

Brilliant Speech by Hon. M. F. Hackett.

We have much pleasure in repro-
ducing, from the Montreal Star of
January 8, the following brilliant
speech delivered in the Quebec Legis-
lature by Hon. M. F. Hackett on the
question of Education in the Pro-
vince of Quebec:

I feel that there is no excuse what-
ever requisite for me to take up the
time of the hon. members of this House
in urging what they must all so freely
and so readily admit, namely, the im-
portance of a proper system of public
instruction, not to the individual
alone, but also to the community in
which he lives and moves and has his
being, but also to the State and to the
nation itself. But since the duties
and responsibilities of providing educa-
tion for the masses are no longer con-
fined either to the parents or teachers,
but are shared in and to a certain ex-
tent supervised by the State it became
a part of the duty of the Government,
and especially of that particular mem-
ber of it to whose department
belongs the great cause of public
instruction, it becomes the duty of
myself and colleagues to-day to see
that no stone is left unturned in the
important work of providing for the
rising generation of the masses of the
people the very best and most ap-
proved system of education that is com-
patible with our resources and our in-
come. This is why the present admin-
istration, having solved the great
question of an equilibrium between
revenue and expenditure, has turned
its attention to that next important
one of public instruction. The an-
nouncement contained in the pro-
gramme speech of the hon. leader of
the Government almost immediately
after the formation of his Government,
touching its educational policy, has,
perhaps, attracted more attention than
any of the other important declara-
tions of the Premier.

It has been followed by weighty ex-
pressions of opinion from all parts of
the Province in favor of educational
reform. These opinions have been by
no means confined to those who are
political supporters of the present ad-
ministration. Liberal as well as Con-
servative new-papers have joined in
the movement. This is as it should
be, and I am convinced that neither
the Government nor the public would
not have it otherwise. The question of education
is one that should be entirely divorced
from politics. It is the duty of both
sides of the House to unite in the im-
provement, and in so far as it may be
possible in the perfecting of our educa-
tional system. Though the responsi-
bility of action lies with the Govern-
ment, the privilege of making sugges-
tions for improvements in this great
work belongs equally to both
sides of this House, and to every mem-
ber in it. I have already referred to
the fact that the newspaper press upon
both sides of politics have freely ad-
mitted the need for the Government's
action foreshadowed by the Prime Min-
ister in educational matters. We have
looked in vain for the suggestion of
any remedy on the part of the press
for the supposed defects in the existing
system which has been signalled by
them to the public. The Government,
on the other hand, has made a careful
study of the situation, and of the needs
of our schools and our teachers, so far
as has been permitted by the time at
their disposal since their acceptance of
office.

Before proceeding to speak of the
changes the Government would like to
make in our present system of public
instruction I must state that we have
an educational history in the Province
of Quebec of which none of us have any
reason to be ashamed. That history is
largely identified with the history of
the nation. Prior to the year 1760
there was no public system of schools
in Canada, and no regular grants were
made by the Government for the pur-
pose of education. Yet very import-
ant educational work was done
under the French regime, and work
of a most interesting character.

It was chiefly carried on by
members of religious orders who had
come out to New France to carry on
missionary work among the native
tribes of Indians. The Recollets, the
Jesuits, the Ursuline nuns made
Quebec their headquarters; the Ladies
of the Congregation and the Sulpici-
ans selected Montreal as the scene of
their labors; the Ursuline nuns and
the ladies of the Congregation devoted
themselves to the education of girls
and the other orders provided institu-
tions for boys. Thus was established
the system of separate education of the
sexes which forms so prominent a fea-
ture of the Roman Catholic schools of
this Province at the present time.

In aid of their work these orders re-
ceived from time to time grants of land
from the French King and also bene-
factions from private individuals. I
am not going to weary the House by
following the interesting developments
under the French regime of these pri-
mal educational movements in the
Province of Quebec. It is true they
were undertaken, largely, in the first
instance for the teaching of the Indian
youth, but they also made themselves
responsible for the education of the
children of settlers. The history of
some of these institutions, such as that
of the Ursuline Convent at Three
Rivers, and of its mother house and
the old Jesuit College at Quebec, is
closely interwoven with that of New
France. I must not linger long,
however, upon these points nor
upon the heroic deeds, the Western
discoveries and the final martyrdom

of some of those self-denying men who
were for a time amongst the professors
of the Jesuit college. The result of
their labors still endures, and Canada
will ever-revere their names and keep
their memory green. In connection
with the old Jesuit college may be
mentioned the Petit Seminary of
Quebec, founded by Bishop Laval in
1668, and which, for many years,
served as a preparatory school for
the college. Before taking leave
entirely of this period there is one
other reference that should be made
to the Congregation de Notre
Dame in Montreal, founded in 1653 by
Marguerite Bourgeois for the educa-
tion of girls. The work of the ladies
of this convent extended so rapidly
that they were unable to meet them-
selves, and were obliged in 1665, to
organize a class in the art of teaching
in order to prepare teachers, whom
they sent out to carry on the work of
teaching that they were unable to do
themselves. The fact is important
because it marks what may be called
the first Normal school work done in
this province. It is somewhat of an
object lesson, too, to the many young
people who now-a-days consider them-
selves fully qualified to become
teachers without undergoing the best
training as soon as they leave school
themselves. It may not have occurred
to all the members of this House that
they ordered things so differently
in what we are accustomed to con-
sider the backward days of two hun-
dred years ago. In 1806, when the
first effort was made to provide
regular Normal schools for this
province, the Ursuline institu-
tions at Quebec and Three Rivers
were requested to arrange for
classes for the training of teachers
in connection with their institutions,
and in 1857, when the three existing
Normal schools were first established,
the girls' department of the Laval Nor-
mal school was placed under the direc-
tion of the Ladies of the Ursuline Con-
vent at Quebec, and this arrangement
was still in force. In the latter part
of the last century and early in the
present one, a large number of other
schools were established in various
parts of the Province. Roman Catho-
lic schools were conducted in the large
villages under the direction of the
cure. The Quebec Education Society,
under the able presidency of Joseph F.
Perrault, and the British and Cana-
dian School Society also did much for
education by supporting schools in and
about Quebec and Montreal.

The United Empire Loyalists gener-
ally started a school in each of the
settlements established by them in
Canada, and immigrants from the
British Isles often erected log school-
houses in their townships by voluntary
efforts where they sent their children
to be taught, defraying themselves the
cost of the school. In order to reach
the period of 1829, when the first sys-
tem of Public schools was established
in this Province, I shall pass over the
period of the Royal Institution, a kind
of State Committee on Education, and
also over the establishment of the
Royal grammar schools of Montreal and
Quebec and the classical colleges of
Nicolas, St. Hyacinthe, Ste. Therese,
Chamblay, Ste. Anne and L'Assomption.
In the year 1829 the first
public elementary school Act for
the Province of Quebec was passed.
It provided that five trustees, elected
in each parish or township, should have
the management of the schools therein.
If they erected a school they received a
grant not exceeding \$50. They also
reported to the Legislature. An an-
nual grant of \$20 was made to each
teacher, and also a grant of 10s. for
each pupil up to fifty. The system
was a voluntary and temporary one,
and there were no taxes imposed upon
the property of the inhabitants for
school purposes. They were required to
provide a suitable building, and to
pay certain fees for the children in
attendance. The teachers were paid
directly by the Government. There
was no efficient supervision of the
schools; no superintendent of educa-
tion, and no paid inspectors. The
clergy and the members for the county
exercised chief control. All grants
were paid upon a certificate of the
local trustees and of the county mem-
ber that these conditions had been
fulfilled. Although this school system
of 1829-32, and the amending Acts,
left much to be desired, over one thou-
sand five hundred elementary schools
were established under its provisions
in the rural sections of the Province of
Quebec.

The elaborate report of the state of
education in this province drawn up
under the direction of Lord Durham in
1831 and the publication in 1841 of an
important series of letters of Charles
Mondelet concerning a Public school
system for the province, prepared the
way for the Act of 1841, which estab-
lished a Common school fund, provided
for a superintendent, for elective school
commissioners, the dissentient schools
for the minority, and introduced the
system of compulsory taxation for the
maintenance of the schools. This law,
as modified in 1846 and amended in
1849, is substantially the same as the
present school law of the province. Un-
der this enactment every substantial
progress has been made by the cause
of education in Quebec. Since Confed-
eration a number of important amend-
ments have been made in the school
laws, chiefly in the direction of divid-
ing our educational work into two sec-
tions, Roman Catholic and Protestant,
and of giving the Protestant section of
the Council of Public Instruction com-
plete control over Protestant schools,
by placing the choice of all school
officers for Protestant institutions in
the hands of the Protestant Committee.
An important guarantee has been
given that these appointments will be

made in a manner acceptable to the
Protestant minority. It will not, I am
sure, be for a moment supposed that I
am seeking to drag in here the discus-
sion of matters foreign to our subject
and our Province when I refer as
proof of the satisfaction of the minor-
ity in Quebec with their present
status in educational matters to the
somewhat recent utterances
in favor of extending a simi-
lar system of Separate schools to
their own to the minority in another
Province which were made by such
leading educational authorities as Sir
Wm. Dawson, the ex Principal of Mc-
Gill, and Dr. Heneker, the respected
Chancellor of Bishop's college of Len-
noxville.

I have no hesitation in declaring
that but little fault can be found with
our educational institutions. In fact
they are on a par with the best that
exist anywhere. The professional
men that have been turned out by
Laval and McGill Universities and by
Bishop's College of Lennoxville are to-
day found in the foremost ranks of
life all over the civilized world.
Some of the best business men in
Canada and the United States gradu-
ated from the High Schools of Montreal
and Quebec. All who are in any way
interested in the cause of education
have cause to be grateful for the noble
benefactions made by wealthy and
patriotic citizens to these institutions
of learning that so admirably build
their superstructure of classical, philo-
sophical and scientific lore upon the
foundations of a sound elementary
education.

This latter is decidedly that to which
the State should direct its efforts. It
is that to which the Government spe-
cially desires to direct the attention and
the sympathy of the House. The elo-
quent Mr. Chaucey Depew laid down
the other day in New York that ele-
mentary education alone should receive
the attention of the State. It is cer-
tainly that which in our own country
demands our principal care. It is that
which, notwithstanding its progress in
the past, leaves the most to be desired,
and has been the object of severest
criticism. The defects which have
been pointed out are not, generally
speaking, defects of the system. They
are rather due to circumstances, many
of which are for the present beyond
our control, such as the sparseness of
the population in our country parts
and the consequent poverty of some of
the more thinly settled of the rural
school municipalities. It is to these
that the Government has believed it to
be its duty to come to their assistance,
and it is coming to their aid at the
earliest possible moment after com-
pleting its work of restoring an
equilibrium in the finances that the
measure of that relief is to be, as al-
ready been put before you.

He quoted statistics to show that the
condition of education in Quebec
is by no means as bad as thought in
some quarters. The hon. gentleman,
after referring to the details of the
Ministerial measure, as already out-
lined by the Premier, pleaded eloquently
for the claims of poor municipalities in
the Province to increased aid and
touched upon the vexed question of
school books to which the Government
had been paying considerable at-
tention. Their object was to de-
crease their cost to parents, and this
was largely to be effected, they
believed, by a greater measure of uni-
formity which they hope to bring
about by their policy of free books to
poor schools in different parts of the
country. He also declared that it was
the intention of the Government to ex-
tend the present system of training
school and delect upon the necessity of
employing none but properly-trained
teachers. This policy would lead up
to and assist the Government in put-
ting into execution another im-
portant plank of their educa-
tional platform, namely, increased
salaries for school teachers. There
were many other educational reforms
in contemplation by the Government,
which they were now engaged in
studying with the co-operation of emi-
nent experts in the cause of public in-
struction and by a comparative study
of the existing systems of education in
Ontario and the United States.

The hon. gentleman concluded with
an eloquent peroration upon the neces-
sity and advantages of a proper na-
tional system of public instruction.

CHATS BY THE FIRESIDE.

For the CATHOLIC RECORD.

No feature in the growth of Catho-
licity in America to-day more
gratifying and encouraging than the
advancement of Catholic intellectual
life. The next decade of years must
surely establish in the United States a
Catholic literature permanent and
current which will be at once the pride
and solace of our people.

I say solace because the intellect of
every man and woman must needs be
satisfied, and what can be more grate-
ful to every true Catholic than a liter-
ary atmosphere, which has its root
and flowering in our holy faith. The
rose of Calvary and lily of Gethsemani
will then bloom where the poisoned
weed of error and decadence crush
out the flowering virtues of the heart.

A Catholic periodical worthy of
special commendation is the *Weekly
Bouquet*, edited in Boston by the poets
James Riley and Henry Coyle. It is
well worthy of the name. *The Catholic
Youth's Companion* and its advent has
marked a new era in the current Catho-
lic juvenile literature of the country.

The Bouquet has an array of contribu-
tors which assures its literary success
and Canadian Catholic fathers and
mothers cannot do better than place
this weekly messenger of literary

grace and greeting in the hands of
their boys and girls. Its editors are
men of culture, good judgment and
Catholic taste.

The veteran Catholic novelist, Mrs.
Anna Hanson Dorsey, is dead. Noble
woman! We always think of Mrs.
Dorsey in company with Mrs. Sadlier
and Miss Starr. What a trinity of
Catholic literary toilers! Their gifted
and busy pens have made possible a
Catholic literature in America. A
surviving daughter of Mrs. Dorsey's
—Ellen Lorraine Dorsey—has inherited
the literary trend of her mother.

Since writing my last "Chats By
the Fireside" I have received a note
from a friend in which he says that I
am wrong in charging the Education
Department, or more properly speaking
the Minister of Education, with the
neglect of appointing a third or fourth
inspector for the Separate schools of
Ontario. He says that such an ap-
pointment has been opposed by one
of the Separate schools inspectors.
There must be some mistake here. No
Catholic worthy of the name and wor-
thy of the confidence of the Catholic
people would dare even secretly to op-
pose such a just and needful appoint-
ment.

There are between seven and eight
hundred Separate school rooms in this
Province, aside from the Catholic In-
dian schools, not a few of which are
situated in well-nigh inaccessible
places, and to say that two officials can
properly inspect these is simply non-
sense. The Department may say it is
done satisfactorily, but it is not, and
Catholics themselves are the best
judges of the matter.

The Toronto *Globe* in a late editorial
did the Catholic schools of Quebec a
grave wrong in saying that their chief
business was to teach the Catholic re-
ligion. In the heat of discussion
the *Globe* should be just. No doubt the
Catholic schools of Quebec emphasize
the teaching of religion, or better still
religious training; but if that be their
chief business how, pray, are the thou-
sands of well-educated Catholic children
in Quebec graduated from their schools?
It seems, however, that any statement
about the Catholics of Quebec will pass
muster in Ontario.

The presence of the Catholic pub-
lisher, Mr. Benziger's "Round Table
of Representative American Catholic
Novelists," on the editorial table of the
New York *Evening Post* has aroused
the spite and spleen of the unworthy
successor of the American poet William
Cullen Bryant as editor of the *Post*.

Benziger Brothers are well known
as the most enterprising Catholic pub-
lishers in the United States and are
doing much to spread abroad good
sound Catholic literature. The
authors who have a place in this
volume which was provoked the rage
of the *Post* are indeed representative.
Not a few of them are known in secu-
lar as well as Catholic literature. It is
surely a round table of Catholic talent
that is encircled by the following
gifted authors: Maurice Francis Egan,
Walter Lecky, John Talbot Smith,
Father Finn, Miss Dorsey and Miss
Sadlier.

But the *Post* gnashes its teeth because
these authors are of the household of
the faith—not agnostics. Nothing
good can come out of Nazareth. So
it proceeds to hack away at Catholic
fiction in general and the representa-
tives in the Round Table in particular.
This attack is not surprising when we
consider that Catholic authors are sys-
tematically and studiously ignored in
all histories of American literature.

The seventeenth century proscribed
our faith, the eighteenth century our
political rights, and it remains for the
nineteenth century to place an inter-
dict upon our intellects. Catholics,
however, have a remedy for this condi-
tion of things. What is it, you will
ask? Simply to foster and build up a
Catholic literature of their own and
thereby aid the enterprise and good
work of such Catholic publishers as
Benziger Brothers, whose excellent
publications do so much for Catholic
literary culture and the preservation of
faith amongst the people. Theman whose
only criticism of Lecky's "Mr. Billy
Buttens" is to sneer, is a big and of no
more consequence to literary life than
a toiling and moiling out in an ant-
hill.

Catholic writers in America are—
thank God!—on the eve of compelling
recognition, despite the ban of their
faith through which little minds like
that of the editor of the *Post* survey
each Catholic literary product, for the
genius of Catholic intellect, like the
genius of Catholic life, is too great
and mighty to be shackled by sneer or
statute and will continue to blossom
and fructify in the freedom and light
of God!

Thomas O'Hagan.

A CONVENT BURNED.

Seven Nuns Perish at Roberval, Que.

Four bare walls are all that remain
of the Ursuline monastery of Roberval,
Lake St. John, and seven out
of the twenty-five Sisters have
fallen victims to the conflagration
which took place there at an
early hour on the morning of the 6th.
The following are the names of the
Sisters who lost their lives: Mother
Ste. Francoise de Paule, formerly
Elise Gosselin, of St. Jean Chrysos-
tome; Sister Providence, formerly
Emma Letourneau, of Quebec; Sister
St. Ursule, formerly Corinne Mar-
meau, of Ste. Foy; Sister Ste. Anne,
formerly Laure Hudon, of Hebert-
ville; Sister Ste. Antoine de Padua,
formerly Catharine Bouille, of Des-
chambault; Sister Ste. Dominique,
formerly Marie Louise Girard, of
Roberval; Sister Ste. Louis, formerly
Rose Gosselin, of St. Jean Chrysos-
tome.

At 5 o'clock Sister St. Radegarde was

preparing the altar for matins in the
chapel of the convent when her taper
brushed some of the lace hangings,
and before she was aware of it the
whole altar was ablaze. Her feeble
efforts to extinguish the flames were
quite futile, and the fire rapidly ex-
tended, while the terrified Sisters
watched its progress in dismay. The
chapel, which is on the second floor of
the establishment, was quickly aban-
doned, and the utmost confusion
prevailed. Finally the Sisters
and some pupils who had been
staying at the convent during the
vacation made their way outside,
where nearly the entire village was
collected by this time. The interior of
the five-story building was of wood,
and the fire spread with such rapidity
that the flames soon burst out from
every window. There was absolutely
no means of combating the conflagra-
tion. The village is unprotected with
a fire engine, and one owned by the
mill, hard by, was out of repair.
Water was not to be had from the lake,
as it was frozen to the bottom, being very
shallow here, and there was even very
little snow.

The interior of the building was
quickly reduced to ashes, and the zinc-
covered roof tumbled in upon the
ruined floors, which gave way with a
crash. All this took place in an in-
credibly short space of time. Mean-
while the Sisters congratulated them-
selves that all the human beings in the
house had escaped, for all had been
dressed when the fire had broken out,
and all had left the building. But a
fresh count revealed that the seven
Sisters above mentioned were missing,
and the only explanation of their ab-
sence was that they had gone back
into the building to save some articles
which they valued, and had been cut
off by the spreading flames. Three
charred bodies were found which it
was impossible to identify. Among
the children staying at the convent
were two nieces of Mr. N. K. Connolly,
the well known contractor. The
seventeen Sister who had been saved
were taken to the presbytery and pro-
vided with accommodation by Cure
Lizotte.

The convent was of wood, encased
in brick and limestone. It was the
first branch institution of the Ursu-
lines of Quebec, with the exception of
the house at Three Rivers, since the
foundation of the order in 1632 at
Quebec. It had been first erected in
1882 under the direction of Monsie-
neur Racine, first Bishop of Chicoutimi,
brother of the present Bishop of Sher-
brooke. It had at first been a wooden
structure, but had subsequently been
enlarged and encased in stone and
brick. Up to the breaking up for
Christmas it had accommodated one
hundred lady pupils from all parts of
the country.

The building and contents were in-
sured for \$12,000 in the Quebec In-
surance Company, which company had
sub insured in several others, there
being six companies interested.

The Rev. Father Marcoux, chaplain
of the Ursuline Convent of Roberval,
related the story of the fire to a Mont-
real *Star* correspondent.

At a quarter to 6 o'clock Sister St.
Remi, whose name was Mile. Her-
mina Hudon, of Hebertville, was light-
ing some candles at the crib, which is
in Catholic chapels at this season of the
year, when the draperies caught fire.
Another Sister, who was in the chapel
at the time, hastened to get some water.
When she returned the whole chapel
was in flames.

Meanwhile Sister St. Remi had been
endeavoring to smother the blaze, but
had not succeeded in getting herself
horribly burned. At this point the
convent bell was sounded, and this
awoke Father Marcoux, whose apart-
ments were situated immediately over
the chapel. The bell only awoke him
in time to make his escape in his night
gown, carrying his soutane over his
arm. The flames burst up through
the flooring of his rooms, which were
speedily destroyed, with their valu-
able contents, comprising the
personal effects of the reverend
gentleman. Had he got the alarm
half a minute later he believed
that he would never have got out alive,
as the smoke was so thick that as it
was he was nearly suffocated.
He found the nuns outside, and is positive
that four at least out of the seven who
perished had got safely out, but had
gone back again, some to try and
rescue some of the records of the com-
munity, and others to see what had
happened to those who had gone in but
who did not return.

The four children, Lily and Annie
Connolly and Alphonsine Gosselin,
niece of one and sister of another of
the victims, and Theresa Langlois,
daughter of Charles Langlois, of Mont-
real, were heroically rescued by Sister
Marie De La Providence, nee Emma
Letourneau, who lost her own life
afterwards; for, having gone to the
dormitories in the top story, roused the
little ones from their beds and hurried
them out all barefooted from the con-
vent, she again returned inside and
was not again seen alive.

Law and Justice.

Law is not always justice. By law
the first Christians were sent to the
tolls. By law Henry VIII. became
head of the so called Church of Eng-
land. By law the Irish people were
denied education and their priests
were hunted like beasts of prey. By
law every tyrant has wrought evil.
All just laws made by due authority
are to be obeyed. All unjust laws, not
contrary to the laws of God, are to be
obeyed until they can be duly amended,
unless circumstances are such that
patience ceases to be a virtue, and
opposition becomes a right if not also
a positive duty.—Catholic Review.