

The Catholic Register

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TORONTO, MARCH 22, 1906.

SUM OF CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL CLAIM.

A pastoral letter of the Archbishop of Westminster on the question of Catholic Education in England, has been issued, and no document that has yet come under our notice, places in a clearer light the justice of the settlement of the late school question in the new provinces of the West, enacted by Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Government a year ago.

The present Ministry declare that it is their earnest desire to arrive at a definite, permanent, and just settlement of the difficulties which have hampered and retarded the educational progress of the country for so many years, and to redress and remove all grievances connected therewith.

Humanitarian Absolutism. How far democratic absolutism will go is not so evident as in a few years is likely. But its trend is clear and the direction in which it turns. Weather signs come principally from the West. So is it in this case.

gated as satisfying the average Englishman, we understand that it is now suggested that it should be imposed by statute on all the public Elementary Schools in the country; in other words, that it should be permanently established and endowed. In the eyes of Catholics this would be the establishment and endowment of Protestantism in its simplest form, and would constitute an education not in conformity with, but in direct antagonism to their conscientious religious convictions.

A Catholic education implies three things—Catholic schools, Catholic teachers, effective Catholic oversight of all that pertains to religious teaching and influence. First, Catholic schools, that is schools in which, as in a Catholic home, all the surroundings shall be such as to keep alive the religious influence, which is an essential part of Catholic life and practice; where, in a word, there can be no doubt at first sight, even to the casual visitor, that the school is intended for and frequented by Catholic children.

Secondly, Catholic Teachers. To a very large extent teachers, in dealing with children of the class needing elementary schools, have to take the place of parents. As we have said elsewhere, "Circumstances are such at the present day that many parents are unable from want of time or lack of capacity, and too often from neglect and indifference, to provide adequately for the education of their children."

HUMANITARIAN ABSOLUTISM.

How far democratic absolutism will go is not so evident as in a few years is likely. But its trend is clear and the direction in which it turns. Weather signs come principally from the West. So is it in this case. The other day a member of the Iowa legislature, Dr. Gregory, a physician, introduced a bill requiring all physicians to take human life in which there is great suffering and death is certain to result and also to prevent the rearing of children who are hideously deformed or hopelessly idiotic.

responsibility? Many things are done in the name of liberty. Things are in a bad way when murder is one of them. The halls of freedom must be nearly the home of slaves when an intelligent legislator boasts that within twenty years the measure he advocates will be on the statute book. They will its page be crimson with the blood of the innocent, and within the hall of the legislature cruel murder will take its seat. The excuse that such practices take place now in large centres does not justify those who are guilty, nor would it make an act of legislation right. Such deeds are murder, no matter by whom committed—and their cry rises to heaven for vengeance. It is worthy of notice that this is not the only attempt of the kind made by false humanitarianism. Not long ago a measure was introduced into another state legislature providing that chronic sufferers and incurables could have the way and gate of death made easy, speedy and open for them. Now this shows that humanitarianism gains ground and that it is absolutism. Excess of kindness is cruelty; and too much civilization is barbarism. That modern surgery is doing much to set aright the malformations of those who otherwise might have only a life-long cross to bear is the comfort society has, but no reason can justify the slaying of others whose sickness is beyond the skill of man. It ought to be society's happiness and honor to take care of these until God's good time has arrived. There is more merit in suffering patiently borne than in great works. More good accrues to society from its protection and patient care of its weaker members than from the pomp of its wealthier or the power of its stronger members. We do not think that society is remiss in its duties to the feeble and the indigent. On every side private and public benevolence generously responds to the strong yet mute appeals of want and suffering. Will society weary of the burthen? It may be. But whether it be weariness of a grave duty, false kindness, or shrinking from suffering, to talk of death as a relief either to the victims or to the public is absolutism of the most revolting character. Call it what they will, it is murder and barbarism.

THE AMERICAN WOMAN.

A writer in one of the magazines lately wrote a critique—and not a very gallant one—upon the American woman. By American, taking the smaller part for the whole, he meant the women of the United States. Canadians are thus saved from the rather severe judgment passed upon the daughters of the neighboring Republic. The American women is not womanly—at least so claims this critic. She is not a woman; she commands man. "She lives so that she can have a good time; she lives for sensations. Her interest lies not in man. She wants to be alone." She dabbles in all manners of studies from botany to Buddhism, and from physiology to the philosophy. Well built and handsome, she is fair, but without dignity or refinement. She has no passion, no sentiment. "To her, home and husband are nothing, and her child—her own creation—very little." The writer compares them to the Spartan women, a coarse type, whose boldness and education led them to compete with men and imitate them except when the weakness of their sex provided an obstacle. But it is no compliment to the English women to claim that their type was Athens. The fact is that throughout paganism woman was degraded. Neither Athenian, Spartan or Roman women are types of their sex as exalted by true Christianity. If women in any nation are falling back to pagan times it is due to the weakening influence of heresy and the lax teaching admitted by non-Catholics concerning divorce and education. Women's rights, co-education and divorce cannot fail to have a baneful influence upon their female votaries. If these should not succeed a powerful auxiliary has been had at work in the irreligious godless teaching of the little red school-house. Between them all the wonder is that women are as good as they are. Their models may be sought in pagan Greece. The cause, which is more important, is to be sought in the error of heterodoxy and the lax morality of heresy. When will the nations recognize the truth? Models like St. Margaret of Scotland, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Queen Blanche of France—and long before them—St. Monica and the martyr matrons and maidens of Rome—are not to be found in other than true Christian homes where the marriage tie is indissoluble, and where filial piety, religious reverence and courageous faith reign and rule. The family is the unit of Christian society—the foundation upon which it is erected. It is in the family that woman is priestess, law giver and helpmate. Her own strength and devotion are the offerings made by this priestess

for the sanctification of herself and home. The law of clemency is her sceptre by word and example within the limits of her cherished kingdom. No slave like the pagan; the Christian wife and mother is her husband's helpmate—and what is higher still, the co-operatrix with God the Father as Creator, with God the Son as Redeemer and with God the Holy Ghost as Sanctifier, of her children. This crown is the jewel of the Christian bride and mother. Generations have worn it, but not the generation that looks for a good time, or the women who prefer selfish solitude. Still less can we look for that jewel on a brow whose crown is replaced by heresy instead of truth and whose heart is weakened by laxity when it should be strengthened by stern morality.

THE THEATRE.

In matters social it is very difficult to lay down a universal proposition approving or disapproving of any source of pleasure. Especially is this true about the stage. The theatre is not absolutely bad, but it is far from being a place for habitual unrestricted attendance. What might be harmless is too frequently poisonous; and what ought to be elevating is more often degrading. Instead of being a school of virtue the theatre is a haunt in which art throws a halo about passion and vice. Managers claim that the public want the unrestrained play and even worse; they do not appreciate other plays of a higher class. So much the worse for the public. Then the managers give what the public want. That is no excuse. If people want poison it is no reason why physicians should deal it out unreservedly. We do not agree with the idea. It is our opinion that if good plays were put upon the boards without all the extravagant paraphernalia and expensive representation now in use, and moderate prices charged, they would wear longest and have the best run. Plays are too sensational, wardrobes too utterly expensive, and prices beyond ordinary reach. As a consequence families either remain away or attend a theatre where their taste suffers. Of late there has been an attempt at a compromise. Scriptural subjects have been taken to form the base. This is wrong—and what is a worse feature is the introduction of unwarranted circumstances, so that the whole is rather a travesty than the true recital of a sacred event or biography. Such a compromise is given in a play called "The Shepherd King." This will offend reverent ears and will not satisfy morbid taste. It may be that some fortunate manager will prepare a play upon such lines which will not harshly grate upon the feelings of religious people, but which will present with fair reality other lands and sacred scenes endeared to the Christian world by the memories of four thousand years. Public taste is not yet so vitiated that such a play would not prove successful, and instructive, and refining. The fact is that not long ago in Toronto we had one of the Middle Age plays, "Every Man," which was full of religious teaching and which was certainly not a financial failure. The theatre needs to get back to greater simplicity, to a higher class of subjects, and drop the combine.

His Majesty the King of Spain

There is an article in Everybody's Magazine for February with the above title by Vance Thompson. It is not an attempt to estimate the character of the King of Spain, nor to prophesy what will be the future of the country under his reign, but the article is chiefly made up of anecdotes about a young man who has been much in the public eye lately. Alfonso XIII. was born of the widowed Marie-Christine on the seventeenth of May, 1886, and, according to the article, immediately after birth he was carried into the great hall of the palace on a gold dish, there to be viewed by the councillors and representatives of the kingdom, and the ambassadors from all the courts of Europe. It is the opinion of Mr. Thompson that in Spain nine men in every ten are republicans, but that sympathy for the little baby king has disarmed the enemies of the monarchy. When one year old he presided at the opening session of the Cortes, and at two years old he gave a garden party to 12,000 school children. It is chronicled that his mother called him "Bubi," as many another mother has called the pride of her heart before and since, and his earliest years were a good deal like those of other children on whose life or death does not hang the hopes and fears of millions of people. He early commenced to learn the trade of a king. In addition to the studies that many little boys of good family take up early in life, Alfonso was taught statecraft and soldiering, and our author says "The little king had no time to get into mischief." When the king was ten years of age Mr. Thompson saw him in company with his mother at San Sebastian and the picture he draws is not attractive. "The recollection I have is that of a small and taciturn boy—an ugly, sad little boy—standing by his mother's side. He was dressed in a sailor suit, and with his long legs, his close-clipped hair, and lank face, was as dreary-

looking a little king as you can imagine." The article speaks of the popularity gained by Alfonso with his subjects because he goes about among them freely and familiarly. At Barcelona, which is a hot-bed of anarchism, he went into the workmen's quarters unguarded, and thereby won the cheers of those who before were sullen and discontented. The king's health has improved and he is now a good swordsman, a first-rate shot and is the owner of fifteen automobiles. We know from newspaper reports that the King of Spain has placed his own and the lives of his companions in danger many times by his desire for speed in riding his automobiles, and in that he resembles many a young man who has plenty of money and has not a firm, restraining hand on him.

In 1905 King Alfonso visited the Courts of Europe. His first visit was to France, and while there he was brought as near to death as he has yet been. In spite of the uniformed police, the Garde Republicaine, and the detectives, both Spanish and French, an anarchist dropped a bomb so close to the carriage in which he and President Loubet were riding that two cavalry horses that were being ridden at the side of the carriage were killed, and a trooper, two policemen and five spectators were wounded. The young king behaved very well under this test and gained many friends by the calmness displayed on the occasion. So you see it is not all fun being a king and he must take the bad fortune with the good, and no doubt the thought that a number of persons are anxious to help him out of the world must give food for reflection to the bravest mind.

King Alfonso XIII. of Spain is about to be married and has selected Princess Victoria Eugenie of Battenberg as his queen. "Perhaps this is the blithest moment of his life; to be twenty years of age—the monarch of a fair land—and to ride abroad from court to court, with the princess of his heart; it is like the things that come to pass in fairytales. And, indeed, his life so far has been little else."

The renunciation of the Protestant faith by Princess Victoria Eugenie of Battenberg, sometimes called "Princess Ena," has caused a little agitation in some quarters in England because the princess is the niece of King Edward VII., but Catholics can afford to view the matter with equanimity. The author sums up the training and personality of the young king in the following words: "He is frank and cordial and good. No vices have taken hold upon him. He has courage and affection and what passes—in kings—for wit and wisdom. Every year thousands of such boys come from the schools and colleges of every land and set about the business of life. He would be more than a prophet who could forecast the life of any one of them. Those who know Alfonso best can only say of him that he is a promising young man—brave and clean and good. His little life history so far is summed up in lessons and spots and the parade of royalty. His destiny, as the destiny of Spain, depends upon the manhood into which he is entering." W. O' C.

Another Interested in the Young Men

Dear Sir,—Your editorial under the heading of "Deputations Wanted," which appeared in your issue of the 1st inst., was a timely and thoughtful article, and I hope may be the means of moving somebody to take action in the matter suggested. You strike the nail squarely on the head when you say, "There is no system in our branch of education. It begins and ends at the parochial school. It opens at the primer and closes at the fourth book." Well, the question arises, what are we going to do about it? Is it not time that some well defined action was taken to remedy this serious state of affairs? Some organization should be effected to put our claim in a tangible and forcible way before the proper authorities.

In the same issue of the "Register" appears another timely article under the heading, "To save our young men" and signed "One Interested." Both these articles point in the same direction, that is to the want of schools for Catholic boys after they pass the Entrance examinations. "One Interested," with a good deal of force and reason, shows that parents of the boys are much at fault for the looseness and apathy shown by many of our so-called Catholic young men and boys, in the cause of Church and religion. This, no doubt, is true, as is easily proved by the fact that in many so-called Catholic homes whilst the dime novel and yellow journal may be in evidence, there is neither Catholic paper nor Catholic book to be seen! But while this no doubt is true, it is no excuse why Catholics should not be fairly dealt with in the matter of higher education and given institutions where their children may be trained under the guidance and control of the authorities of the Church.

This seems to be the point at issue, and upon this all-important point somebody should get busy without further delay, and I hope the articles I refer to may set the ball rolling. Now, without wishing to prolong the discussion or taking up too much of your valuable space, I, in common with "One Interested," deeply deplore the want of a right spirit amongst so many of our Catholic young men. In every congregation it is noticeable how many young men shirk every little duty with which they should be intimately associated in Paris; work. They will join no Catholic society for the reason that they would thus be obliged to live up to the discipline of the Church—the very thing they wish to avoid. They will assist at no Catholic entertainment, while a mis-
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show may always look with confidence for liberal patronage from that quarter. They may go to Mass, but if they do they plainly exhibit their impatience and are frequently seen making their exit before the last Gospel is read. And worse than all, they are too frequently the cause of grave scandal by their names appearing on the lists of "Drunk and Disorderly" in the public courts. Well, the only remedy for all this is right-train,ing, both at home and at school, and anything that can be done in this direction should be the great aim of every Catholic in the land.

Yours truly, THOMAS HANLEY, Port Arthur, March 6, 1906.

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