

would be neither difficult nor disagreeable—to show that the methods and results of the Christian Brothers' educational system are unsurpassed by any other body of teachers in this country. It is simply to our present purpose to inquire why the report of the Ontario commissioners has given rise in the minds of many to grave doubts regarding its fairness, honesty, accuracy and impartiality; why, from the first, numerous true friends of educational reform looked with suspicion on the composition of the commission, and cannot now accept its conclusions.

It is claimed that the Christian Brothers were inefficient: that they did not hold qualifying certificates; and that the teaching of English, as by law required, was neglected in the French schools. To inquire into these—and other—charges, a commission was appointed, and there the difficulty began. The Minister of Education appointed the members of the commission—but on whose suggestion? It is very important to have a satisfactory answer to this question—and to others. How came it that on both the first and second commission, there was at least one member notoriously unfriendly to the Christian Brothers? Were the accused or their friends consulted in any way regarding the formation of the commission? Why were graduates of the Brothers' schools carefully excluded from the commission? Were the commissioners at any time, directly or indirectly, under influences that might reasonably be considered hostile to the Brothers? Did the Commissioners ever see a Christian Brother teaching, or did they know anything about the Brothers' methods? Did any member of the commission ever have any difficulty with the Brothers, or had he any prejudices against them? Since a large majority of the schools and scholars to be examined were French, why were commissioners appointed

who had not the slightest practical knowledge of the French language? Did any member of the commission ever do any inefficient teaching himself? Did he ever neglect his school to look after his personal advancement? In fine, was the commission such as the commissioners themselves would like to be judged by? Was it honest? Was it impartial? Was it unprejudiced? Had it no axe to grind, no imaginary slight to avenge, no former course of action to justify? We await an answer to all of those questions before condemning the Christian Brothers and their Ottawa schools. One thing is certain, that if the enemies of a system or of an order, have had the naming of its judges, the verdict is not worth the paper on which it is written.

THE BITERS BITTEN.

The result of the recent investigations into the workings of the Ottawa separate schools has been given to the public in the form of an official report. The *True Witness* picks the following flaws in the form and matter of the document. We print the criticism with the greater pleasure, as the Editor of the *True Witness*, Dr. J. K. Foran, is one of our Alumni, and has, single-handed, raised his paper to a proud position among the Catholic journals of America.

"As the great object of the commission was to investigate the teaching of English in French schools, let us here give some attention to the English used by the very gentlemen who composed the commission.

(See report, page 19.) "On arriving at this school the next morning, Brother Director Mark informed them, etc." Who arrived? Brother Mark or the commissioners?

(Page 21.) "The boys count their fingers." Did the boys count their fingers or ON their fingers?

(Page 21.) "The boys were apparently taught nothing," etc. Is "apparently" in its proper place?

(Page 43.) "Pick out the adverbs," etc. What do the commissioners mean by "pick out"? Is it a dignified expression?