

"The first law of history is to dread uttering falsehood ; the next, not to fear stating the truth ; lastly, that the historical writings should be open to no suspicion of partiality or of animosity."

Almighty God reminds His creatures once again what is the law of life under His full revelation. Every Catholic Christian must feel now even something more of the great responsibility that is laid on him not to speak or write except in the spirit of His law and His counsel.

Catholics were urged by Rome to avoid, in the interim, the very semblance of being contentious. And these latest words of the Church, while telling them what is of God, and what is of Cæsar, counsel a generous readiness to meet justice in any men, and help it forward wherever found.

The moment is fitting for placing clearly before our minds this school question, "assuredly one," as the encyclical says, "of the greatest importance and of exceptional gravity."

In these pages it is not necessary to tell of what interests are at stake in an education question, nor of how wandering thoughtful minds seem to be looking in the same direction as does the Church—with blinkers on, however, as it were, lest by any means they should be found to be seeing eye to eye with Rome. Still she must be glad, though saddened, too, even if not amused, noting their strange infatuation about the one guardian of the Christian family and school. And her mind is not least interested just now in these matters as they stir among English-speaking people or their fellow-subjects. American readers will spend some time well in looking once again at this school question in Manitoba.

And they will not be offended at information set down here as to the condition of Canada. Many of them naturally know little about that thinly populated country—too little, often, whether they be business men, patriots, or founders of true and wise relations between the American countries of the future.

Canada, *i.e.*, almost all the habitable country north of the United States—so we mean for practical purposes in our writing now—has yet a population of barely 5,000,000; the Province of Ontario (formerly Upper Canada) having over 2,000,000; the Province of Quebec (formerly Lower Canada), about 1,500,000.

For the whole of Canada the chief religious statistics (1891) are: Catholics, 2,000,000; 41 per cent. of whole. Methodists, 850,000; 17 per cent. of whole. Presbyterians, 750,000; 15 per cent. of whole. Episcopalians, 650,000; 13 per cent. of whole. Baptists, 300,000; 6 per cent. of whole.

And for national descent the 1871 Census gave: French, more