

PROVINCIAL RIGHTS AND SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

What is curious is that, while every one feels that repugnance to the very principle of Separate Schools is the real source of the feeling against the education clauses of the constitutions of the new provinces, all those who have expressed themselves strongly on the subject, whether public bodies passing resolutions, or orators, or newspapers, have had an instinctive unwillingness to allege this. In every case the light is made upon provincial rights. Even the Globe has set interference with provincial rights as the danger which threatens the country. This mode of arguing has its weak side. The strength of Canada does not lie in provincial separatism, but in national solidarity; and this universal shouting for provincial rights as paramount, and this speaking of the national government as an outside power which has no business with local affairs, is, nationally speaking, a very bad sign. It is not hard to understand the strength of provincialism in Ontario, whose whole history has been an effort to get free from the adjoining province, which at one time had too powerful a sway over her. But it always seems strange to us when this cry is echoed among the minority in Quebec, which has everything to lose by it. The declaration that education is absolutely a matter for the individual province, and that any national stipulation with regard to it is an outrage, sounds very strange coming from people who would not submit for a moment to such a system of schools as the majority in their own province would consider ideal. When asked if they would so submit, they say with surprise, 'Why, that is a totally different thing,' the Quebec system would be 'sectarian,' while the common school system should be so carried on as to offend no religion. They do not see that in seizing the question, of course the two ideals are very different. If it were not so, there would be none of this trouble. But just as strong as is our objection to the clerical school for our children, so strong is the objection of the Roman Catholic for the non-clerical school. People may say they do not believe this; that many Roman Catholics in their hearts prefer the non-sectarian school. This is not the purpose of the article; they say they do hold these conscientious objections, and who but themselves can say what they believe? When they cease to prefer Separate schools they will presumably have none. We may say it is only the priests who want the Separate schools, but our system of government is based on persuasion, and, if they can persuade the people more than we have to accept the declarations of our fellow citizens as to what they really do want.

But as to the Parliament, which represents the nation, having nothing to say in the matter, it is against all the analogies of our history. No one province has yet entered into confederation without some stipulation as to the educational provisions which should prevail in it. Education was to be a matter of exclusive provincial jurisdiction under the initial limitations agreed upon. To make stipulations into the present case is held by a multitude of writers to be beyond the competency of parliament. There are those on the other hand who hold that the country as a whole has a right to determine the terms on which any region shall obtain provincial rights, and that new provinces cannot claim immunity from limitations in the supposed interest of the whole which the older ones have to submit to. If this be so the determination whether there shall be any educational stipulations, and if so what, rests obviously with parliament. If this latter view is correct, the whole claim on the basis of provincial rights falls to the ground. In any case it is given prominence to cover what the objectors do not seem to dwell on, namely, that their real objection is to the Separate schools. It is curious to find the Conservative party in this matter coming out as the champion of provincial rights, and the Liberals, who have in the past always been the champions of provincial rights, now declaring for national responsibility. This, however, is easily understood. Nine years ago the positions were reversed, and at that time the Conservative party went so far as to propose remedial legislation to force Separate schools on Manitoba. It cannot very well now come out as opposed to that principle, but it hopes to crystallize the strong sentiments which exist in the whole of the Protestant majority against Separate schools, and possibly to hold some followers who are in favor of them, by a resolution declaring simply for provincial rights.—Montreal Daily Witness.

HOT-HEADED PREACHERS.

The Toronto Globe characterizes Mr. Rogers' report of his mission to Ottawa as "the most infamously mendacious paper that ever issued from a man holding a reputable public position." Yet Protestant ministers in Toronto the Good went off at half cock the moment the report in question was published in the newspapers. "Rev. Canon Cody," we quote from the Montreal Star, "said that he considered that it would be the duty of the Prime Minister to do his duty and resist any such dictation." You see the canon literally went out at half cock. A man under excitement seldom opens his mouth without putting his foot in it. Rev. W. J. McKay, editor of the Canadian Baptist, being asked his views by a press correspondent, blurted out, the very first thing, "If the country wants a revolution it will get it mighty quick." For the sake of reputable journalism, we trust this clerical editor had the decency to be ashamed of himself after his wrath had time to get below the boiling point. "We'll mutiny," say the Roman citizens in the play. But then,

great Caesar fell, what a fall was there, my countrymen!

It strikes us, too, that McKay is not the master of persuasive speech that Mark Antony was. All the same, if we Canadians should wish at any time to indulge in the pastime of a revolu-

tion (against ourselves), he is ready to get one up for us, and get it up "mighty quick." But really it is Mr. McKay who wants a revolution—of thoughts in his mind b-f-fore discharging them. The sage advice of Polonius he would do well to take to heart, and give his "thoughts no tongue," at least until he has taken pains

To a lay with some cold drops of modesty his "skipping sprig." But perhaps the most ludicrous ebullition of this temper in a teapot is the threat of County Master Fred Dane, of the Orange Lodge of Toronto. "We will from this time on be most aggressive." Since when have Orangemen ceased to be most aggressive—with their mouths isn't this just what Orangemen are for? The only unaggressive Orange man known to fame is the dead Orangeman.—Antigonish Casket.

COURAGEOUS STATESMANSHIP.

North-West Review. The subjoined editorial remarks of the Casket, in its issue of March 30, are so fully in accord with our own views that we gladly subscribe to them here. "Three weeks ago," writes the far-seeing editor of our Antigonish contemporary, "we feared that the educational clauses of the Autonomy bill were to be amended so as to render them of little value. Even a week ago, relying upon reports in newspapers which seemed to be in the confidence of the Government, we referred to its policy as niggardly and precarious. We are happy to say that our fears have not been justified. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has stood to his guns in the face of assaults which might have made him doubt whether it would not be wiser to retreat. The only difference between the bill as at first read and the bill as amended is that the latter makes it clear that, in order to draw public money, the Separate schools must in all respects conform to the requirements of the law. Whatever others may have thought we have always believed in certified teachers and Government inspection wherever State aid was sought, and we welcome those provisions for the schools of the new Provinces because we believe they will raise and uphold the standard of efficiency. As to Mr. Borden's speech, we scarcely know what to say of it. It is an elaborate constitutional argument better suited to the law courts than to the House of Commons. If it proved its case it would destroy all guarantee for the rights of religious minorities outside of Quebec and Ontario, and make them what the Ottawa Citizen calls them in the North-West "squatters on other people's land." It is true they are sold that they have the protection of remedial legislation, but when the country refused to grant them that protection in a case where the highest court in the Empire declared they had an undoubted grievance, it was plain that they never more look for redress to the Federal Parliament once their rights had been wrested from them. Their only hope in the future was to forestall any attempt to deprive them of their rights. This is exactly what the courageous statesmanship of Sir Wilfrid Laurier has now done for them. The Act of Parliament which has made Manitoba a Province proved open to misconception on the question of Separate schools. The Privy Council told the minority that they had misconstrued it in supposing that it guaranteed the continued existence of their schools. We, on our part, believe yet as we believed then, that it was the Privy Council which was guilty of misconception. At all events we do not wish such a dispute to occur again, and the only way to prevent it with absolute certainty was that adopted by the Government in drawing up the Autonomy Bill for Alberta and Saskatchewan.

THE LITTLE RED SCHOOL HOUSE.

There is a fine faith in the little red school house abroad in the land. An attractive picture is drawn of the children of all the people going to the same schools, studying the same lessons walking home together. The children of the people working together, playing together, and learning in their youth the lessons of a common citizenship—that is the ideal put before the public. It is a fine ideal; we wish the prospect of attaining it were better than it is. The World, the News, the Globe, and the Telegram, in this city, cannot sufficiently admire the little red school house, nor view with sufficient alarm anything having a separating influence among the children of the people.

And yet, the editor of the World does not himself send his children to the Public schools. Nor does the editor of the News. Nor does the editor of the Globe. Nor the proprietor of the Telegram. These newspapers have a boundless regard for the Public school, where the children of all the people meet on terms of perfect equality, regardless of religious or social differences—where, side by side, the children of the rich and the poor, the Samaritan and the Levite, learn together the duties of a common citizenship. But when the common citizenship class stands up to say its lessons in the Public schools, the children of many important people are among the absentees.—Toronto Star, March 31.

Christian or Secular? In the Parliament of Canada, at Ottawa, recently, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Prime Minister of Canada, said: "I thank heaven that in our schools, young children are taught Christian morals and Christian doctrine. Either the Canadian system is right or the American system is right. I know we are right. It is a faulty system of education that does not train the conscience, instruct in ethical principles, and develop the character. The Canadians are right to reject it. There is no reason why Christian people should have Godless schools.—Catholic Columbian, Columbus, Ohio.

TAXATION AND SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the Globe: Perhaps it would be well for those who are giving such vigorous opposition to the educational clauses of the North-West Autonomy Bill to consider what they expect to accomplish if those clauses are eliminated from the measure. Let us go a step further and ask what would be accomplished if the Separate school clauses were eliminated from the British North America Act, and the application of Catholic taxes to the support of Roman Catholic Separate schools denied them. Would this abolish Separate schools? An abolition of what does not abolish has little to commend it to any one. Assuming for the moment that the Separate school clauses were eliminated from the British North America Act, the matter would stand where it always has stood with our Holy Mother the Church; on her direction we would consider if there was no other alternative, and deem it better to remain in ignorance than to become learned in Godless schools at the risk of the loss of faith.

The reason so many Protestants are in favor of the abolition of Separate schools is that their point of view is so completely different from our own. They consider material progress to be the first necessity. We desire material progress, but our faith is first and nothing can compare with it. With the Catholic the first necessity is that the child should be a good Christian, observing and following the laws of God and of the Roman Catholic Church to the letter. We desire education in secular subjects as well, but we cannot weigh this in the balance with our faith.

In the arguments used by non-Catholics against the continuance of Separate schools they invariably commence with a statement of the desirability of educating Catholic and Protestant side by side in the same building, that they may in their life after school be friends and neighbors.

They assume in their arguments that if the taxes of the Catholic ratepayer go to the Public school his children will follow the taxes. This is a false hypothesis. The Catholic children will not attend the public school, whatever may become of Catholic taxes. Catholics must, if deprived of the right of paying their taxes to the Roman Catholic Separate schools, maintain their Separate schools out of their own pockets.

The abolition of the educational clauses in the North-West Autonomy Bill and the Separate School clauses in the B.N.A. Act would merely mean the application of certain moneys taken from the pockets of Roman Catholics towards the education of the children of their Protestant fellow citizens. Does any Protestant desire this? Just a word or two in reference to the comments, most uncalled for, in regard to Monsignor Sbarretti and his interview with Mr. Campbell. That the ablegate should have an interview with Mr. Campbell and express in that interview an opinion as to the extension of the boundaries of Manitoba is viewed with uplifted hands by certain good people. Monsignor Sbarretti represents the Catholics of the whole Dominion. Certain of these Catholics outside of Manitoba live in a territory which Manitoba would wish to annex, and these Catholics now possess Separate schools. Is there anything horrifying in his calling the attention of the Attorney General of that Province to these facts and that any annexing of this territory by Manitoba, which would mean the depriving of these people (Separate schools) which they now have (a vested right) would be vigorously opposed by them and by Catholics everywhere?

Now with reference to a remark reported by the newspapers as having been made by Mr. Bristol, nominee in Centre Toronto of the local Conservative convention, I am not pretending to give the words, but the effect, viz., "That it would be well for Roman Catholics to pause before interfering with the extension of the boundaries of Manitoba, lest the Protestants of Canada be tempted to resort to force," and thus no doubt having thrashed the Catholics into submission, bring them to their senses. I would be glad to assure Mr. Bristol and those who feel as he does that the Catholics of this Province and all the other Provinces of Canada listen to such a threat with the most perfect equanimity. Assuming that Mr. Bristol's threat was anything more than the vapors of a pin feathered politician, I would still assure him that we Catholics are not as timid as he imagines. Perhaps it would be well for him and those who believe with him to read the speech of the Duke of Wellington when the Bill for Catholic emancipation was before the Imperial House. He would learn on that authority that the blood of Irish Catholics drenched every field where British soldiers fought from Corunna to Waterloo. He may or may not be aware that in many instances the sons and grandsons of these men are the Roman Catholics inhabiting the Dominion of Canada.

The same high ideals which prompted their forefathers to fight, bleed and die for their king and country would now cause them to resist oppression and gladly to fight, and if necessary to die for their faith. WILLIAM STEERS. Lindsay, April 15.

PAY NO ATTENTION.

Toronto papers pay practically no attention to the speeches made by Mr. Fisher and Mr. Ames, speeches which, if these papers desired to be fair to Quebec, they could not treat as of the highest national importance. The whole essence of the argument made against the bill is in the allegation that an intolerant Quebec seeks to force its will upon the new provinces. Mr. Fisher and Mr. Ames, speaking for the Protestant minority in this province, one from the Liberal side the other from the Conservative side of the House, clearly demonstrated that in the relations between majority and minority in Quebec in the matter of education and in other matters, the majority are particularly careful that the minority shall have no grievance. Why Mr. Haultain is protesting that the compromise clause on education in the Autonomy Bills actually leaves the minority some of the rights that were theirs under the Act of 1870, Mr. Ames is informing the House that the Quebec minority are actually in the enjoyment of all the pre-Confederation compact assured to them—and more. While the Toronto press is ringing with denunciation of the evil caused by letting people be instructed in different schools, Mr. Fisher actually leaves the minority some of the rights that were theirs under the Act of 1870, Mr. Ames is informing the House that the Quebec minority are actually in the enjoyment of all the pre-Confederation compact assured to them—and more. 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