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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1905.

Calendar for Next Week.

FEBRUARY.

- 19—Septuagesima Sunday.
- 20—Monday—Votive office of the Holy Angels.
- 21—Tuesday—The Prayer of Our Lord in the Garden.
- 22—Wednesday—The Chair of St. Peter at Antioch.
- 23—Thursday—St. Peter Oamian, Bishop, Doctor, Vigil.
- 24—Friday—St. Matthias, Apostle.
- 25—Saturday—Votive office of the Immaculate Conception.

WANTON BIGOTRY.

To the Editor of the
North West Review,
Dear Sir,

The Gretna public school, like others in Manitoba, has a circulating library among its scholars. Attention was recently drawn to a book from this library, in which the scenes are laid in Red River and the North West Territories of earlier days. The book highly commends Presbyterian, Episcopal, and others Protestant missionaries for their labours in a wild country to convert and civilize the natives. Deservedly so. The history of the Hudson Bay Territory is such, however, as to lead us to expect that one would hear of Catholic Missionaries; yet not a word is mentioned of the many heroic pioneer missionaries of that faith, whose names are so closely woven in the history of this country, and whose lives were a daily sacrifice to the service of God in the Great Lone Land.

It is a suppression of truth and fact, at which no umbrage is shown, but an emphatic protest is made, when the author goes out of his way to malign and calumniate the Catholic faith, when he makes the hero of his story say in a defence of truth, so-called, as explained to one of the characters in the story: "Papist Jacques being a man who has sold his liberty in religious matters to the Pope, and a Protestant being one who protests against such an infernally silly, and unmanly state of slavery."

See page 136, of the "Young Fur Traders", by R. M. Ballantyne.

Why should Catholics be taxed to circulate such slander against their faith?

Catholic Parent.

Gretna, Feb. 8, 1905.

Editorial Note.—Of course they should not. Our correspondent's point is well taken. Although Protestant missionaries have been more successful in the Canadian Northwest than in almost any other part of the world in converting the heathen to a fragmentary and outwardly respectable form of Christianity, still their success, both as to quantity and quality, is as nothing compared to the achievements of Catholic Missionaries in the same region. R. M. Ballantyne's stupid bigotry is as unpardonable as it is unscriptural. *Matth. XVIII. 17*: "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican". *1 Tim. III. 15*: "The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM OF NEWFOUNDLAND.

The problem which the legislators of Newfoundland had to solve when a system of schools became necessary did not admit of easy solution. A small population scattered along an immense length of coast, accessible in many places by water only, is not easily organized for any purpose. Today the population of two hundred and twenty thousand occupies a coast line of two thousand miles or more. The legislators were wise in not attempting to construct a completely new system. They made use of such elements of organization as already

existed. Such were the Churches of different denominations and the schools previously founded and supported by them. There were clergymen in all places of any importance, often the only educated men in their respective districts. They had a direct interest in schools. In a letter dated August 15th 1836 Bishop Fleming of St. John's says incidentally: "At my own expense I have established and maintained an institution for the education of the poor, at which a thousand children are daily receiving gratuitous education". And in a letter written two years later he remarks that in other harbors he had purchased sites for similar schools. The Protestant Pastors had also been active in school work. In 1830 the Newfoundland School Society in connection with the Church of England had twenty-four schools in different parts of the Colony with an attendance of 1500 children. It would have been folly on the part of the Legislature to ignore such efforts, and especially to ignore the social force which produced such results. There was in truth no thought of ignoring either the work or the motive. The subsequent legislation resulted in the establishment of a State-supported system of parochial schools. For convenience we may use the word "parish" to indicate the district assigned to a pastor of any denomination. Every parish in Newfoundland is a school district for the people in the parish of the same religious denomination as its pastor. In St. John's, however, there is but one such district for each denomination. In each district a school board is appointed by the Government, consisting of five or seven members, one of whom must be the pastor, and all the other members must be of the same religious denomination as the pastor. The pastor is usually elected chairman of the board, and he it is who performs most of the duties devolving by law upon the board. The board buys sites, builds school houses, appoints teachers, pays salaries, and sends an annual statement of receipts and expenditures to the Superintendent. The school district may be five, twenty, or a hundred miles in extent. The board must decide when and where schools are needed within the districts, and must supply furniture, apparatus, and whatever is needed in a school.

If you meet a Newfoundlander and do not know what religion he professes, you are pretty safe in saying that he is a Catholic or an Anglican or a Methodist. Those not included under this division are less than five per cent. of the population. In 1901, when the last census was taken, the three principal denominations stood thus:

Catholics	75,989
Anglicans	73,008
Methodists	61,388

The schools of each of these bodies have their own Superintendent, who also acts as inspector, visiting and examining the schools under his jurisdiction. These officials are appointed by the Government. They are usually clergymen in the case of Protestant schools, and laymen for Catholic schools. The Anglican and the Methodist Superintendents attend to the general needs of schools belonging to other Protestant bodies.

Teachers are prepared for their work in the colleges belonging to the various religious bodies, which are subsidized by the Legislative grant. In addition to the subsidies for colleges the Government pays the college expenses (including board) of a certain number of young people selected by the Boards and approved by the Superintendent, who, in return, undertake to teach during one year and a half for every year their expenses are thus paid at college. They receive the salaries paid to teachers during this time. The Government aid is simply an inducement to become teachers. In the case of Catholic female teachers the training is received in a convent academy which, in this respect, is regarded as a college. The supply of teachers is increased by advanced pupils in convent and other good schools throughout the Colony without any special assistance. Annual examinations are held for the purpose of licensing and classifying the teachers. Convent schools receive certain fixed grants, ranging from \$200 in outlying districts to \$1000 in the city, and in addition receive amounts depending on the grade of license held by Sisters who have passed the examination for teachers. They may teach without such license, but in that case the fixed grant is all the Convent receives.

There is one part of the system strictly non-denominational. It is a

written annual examination designed to bring the different denominations into comparison and competition. The questions are formulated and the papers are examined in England, in order to avoid local jealousies. It is an examination in various grades of advancement, from country school pupils to college students. No school is obliged to prepare candidates for it, but ambitious teachers everywhere do it voluntarily, when their pupils show intelligence and a desire to learn. A board of competent men in St. John's arrange for the conducting of this examination wherever called for, under very strict rules.

There is no direct taxation in Newfoundland. The revenue is derived chiefly from import duties. The school boards have no power of taxing ratable property. Each board receives a portion of the general school grant determined by its population according to the last census. Of the total grant for education, part is devoted to general purposes, such as salaries of Superintendents, subsidies to colleges and high schools, training of teachers, examinations, etc. About \$31,000 is paid directly to teachers in sums varying according to grade of license. The rest is divided among the school boards. From the amount accruing to Catholic boards are taken the fixed grants paid to the twenty convent schools. The larger part of other teachers' salaries is paid by the school board.

This system, amended from time to time in detail, has been in operation for sixty-one years. It gives general satisfaction. There is no agitation looking to a change of system. No political party would venture to advocate such change as part of its policy. The census of 1901 showed that seventy-five per cent. of the people could read. Anyone who realizes the way the people are scattered along the shore, fixing habitations wherever fish is abundant, the absence of roads and bridges in many places, and the fact that the old treaties between England and France prevented the civil organization of the West Coast until recent years, will at once see that no other system could have produced a better showing. In 1902 the total grant for education was \$152,692. In that year there were 735 schools in operation with 40,769 pupils in attendance. The cost to the Government was therefore only \$3.75 per pupil. The grant was increased to \$187,824 the following year, and will be again increased; but the system is economical as compared with the non-denominational system. A comparison with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, which have the non-denominational system, will make this evident. Newfoundland now spends 85 cents of public money per head of population for education and has one child for every 4.95 of population in school. Nova Scotia spends \$2.03 per head of population and has one child for every 4.65 in school. New Brunswick spends \$1.90 per head of population and has one child for every 5.59 attending school. This means that the influence of religious interests underlying the Newfoundland system is equivalent to a large grant in itself. Pastors often erect school houses by means of free labor and special collections or even out of parish funds. The Anglicans claim that they voluntarily contribute over thirty thousand dollars a year for school purposes, and other denominations are not less interested. One of the motives which impel Catholics to supplement the public grant by voluntary contributions of time and money is the desire to have their children prepare at school for first Communion. The people very often

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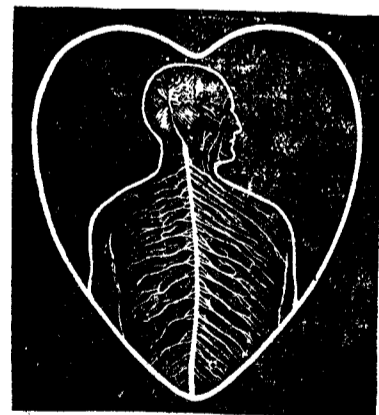
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supply fuel free in winter. In a word, religion brings the people into living contact with the schools, and services obtained in this way are less onerous as well as more valuable than the same services paid for by public money.

Each school is a public school. No child is excluded on the score of religion. Where people of one denomination are too few to have a school, their children attend the school of another, and the Law provides that "no teacher in any college, academy, or school aided by moneys granted under this Act shall impart to any child attending the same any religious instruction which may be objected to by

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the parent or guardian of such child". Of course, children so situated are deprived of religious instruction in school; but these are few compared with those who are made to feel at school that a knowledge of religion is more important than a knowledge of grammar or arithmetic.

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