



The "Casket" on the Encyclical.

It needs no saying that, to the Catholics of Canada, this is the most important document that the Holy See has ever sent to this country; and as such we bespeak for it the careful attention and loyal acceptance of all Catholics. Most assuredly it will receive these at the hands of every Catholic worthy of the name.

Of the many thoughts that suggest themselves in connection with this most important pronouncement, we can to-day set down only a few. Of these the first and most obvious is that, like all written documents, the Encyclical has to be interpreted; and that its rightful interpreters are the Bishops, to whom it is addressed, subject always to the decision of the Holy See, whence it emanates. Every word which we now say, or which we may at any time hereafter say, upon it, is therefore most humbly and loyally submitted to their authority and is always subject to their approval. It is with this distinct understanding that we venture to offer any opinions of our own regarding the import of this most important document.

In the first place it will be noted concerning the Holy Father's pronouncement that it is made at the instance of the Premier and other members of the Government of the Dominion, more than one of whom has visited the Pope within the past year. The Bishops having declared the arrangement of the school question made by the Premier unsatisfactory, the latter appealed to Rome, and the document which we publish to-day is the result of that appeal.

Now, then, what does this document decide? Let us examine, always in the light of the above-expressed readiness to be guided by authority, a few of the principal points touched upon.

It is worthy of remark that the Holy Father, no doubt advisedly, prescind entirely from the constitutional questions involved—questions which have already been dealt with by the proper and highest authorities, and which do not as constitutional questions come within his sphere. He treats the matter from the standpoint of natural, rather than of constitutional, right. The Manitoba law, he says, inflicted a wrong because it infringed the natural rights of Catholics to have such schools for their children as they could approve of. But, it must be remembered, it likewise inflicted a wrong because it infringed the constitutional right—founded upon what the Privy Council calls "a Parliamentary compact" and appealing to all good citizens whatever their views of education—to have that natural right maintained inviolate.

We need scarcely call attention to the masterly manner in which the Encyclical, in most unequivocal language, lays down the Catholic doctrine regarding education. In the controversy that has raged around the Manitoba school question even this matter has been misrepresented. We had a Protestant statesman, now a Minister of the Crown for Canada, endeavoring to prove in these columns that the Church took no such position, and we had a professed Catholic Minister publicly declaring in Manitoba itself that he was utterly opposed on principle to separate schools. "A Catholic might as well say that he was opposed to the doctrine of Purgatory. This is not the first time Rome has spoken on this subject, but we may surely hope that no further utterance upon it may be required.

The Holy Father then proceeds to show the reasons for this position, which he does most effectively. We have next a most emphatic expression of complete approval of the course maintained by the Bishops since the inception of the difficulty; and this, in view of all that has been said thereabout, is a point of the highest importance.

The Pope next deplores the unfortunate disunion among Catholics upon this question. Having noted with regret the lack of union among citizens in general in regard to it, he says: "What is more deplorable still is that Catholic Canadians themselves failed to unite as they should in defending those interests, which are of so great importance to all—of such importance and gravity, indeed, as should have stilled the voice of

party politics, which aims at matters of much less moment."

This is the burden of the Holy Father's Letter—unity. After instructing us that the end to be sought is the restoration and safeguarding of the entire rights of the Catholic minority, he again says: "Nothing can be more injurious to the attainment of this end than discord. Unity of spirit and harmony of action are most necessary." And yet again he exhorts all to "resolve in fraternal unanimity," under the advice of the Bishops, "to do that which the circumstances require and which appears best to be done." And still again does he beseech them to "endeavor to promote unity of thought and action, without which there is little or no hope that that which we all desire will be obtained."

God grant that this admonition may at length be heeded—that the words of the Vicar of Christ may at length awaken Catholics to a sense of their most sacred duty in this regard! For our part it shall be our aim to promote, by every means in our power, that unity among our people. Did we not rise to the solemnity of the occasion, it would be easy for us to make this article, and others to follow, a means of personal victory. Heaven knows we have had provocation enough to make the song of victory sweet to human nature. But there are higher interests at stake than personal ones, and for the sake of these we forbear.

We merely call attention to the fact that the alleged settlement of this unsettled question is unequivocally condemned as "defective, unsuitable, and not adapted to the purpose."

We have touched upon but a few of the many points in the decision that can profitably be considered; but we have much to say of it yet.

The "True Witness" On The Encyclical.

The voice of the highest tribunal, so far, at least, as Catholics are concerned, has spoken on the Laurier-Greenway compromise in regard to the Catholic schools of Manitoba. The Supreme Pontiff has declared that compromise to be "defective, unsuitable and inadequate." Henceforward there will be no division of opinion on the question amongst Canadian Catholics. The path of duty has been plainly marked out for them by the highest authority which they acknowledge in this world; and they will tread it with no faltering steps. The question has been lifted by His Holiness out of the arena of party politics and party squabbles into which it ought never to have entered; and it has been placed upon the lofty level of truth and justice.

Elevated though it is in tone, as are all the utterances of the Holy Father, and gentle though it is in its eloquent persuasiveness, the language of the encyclical in affirming Catholic principles on the subject of education is clear and unmistakable. Here are his words: "Justice and reason demand that our children have in their schools not only scientific instruction, but also moral teaching in harmony with the principles of their religion, a teaching without which all education will be not only fruitless but absolutely pernicious. Hence the necessity of having Catholic teachers, reading books and text books approved of by the bishops, and liberty so to organize the schools, that the teaching therein shall be in full accord with the Catholic faith as well as with all the duties that flow therefrom. For the rest, to decide in what institution their children shall be instructed, who shall be their teachers of morality, is a right inherent to parental authority. When, then, Catholics demand, and it is their duty to demand and to strive to obtain, that the teaching of the masters shall be in conformity with the religion of their children, they are only making use of their rights; and there can be nothing more unjust than to force on them the alternative of allowing their children to grow up in ignorance or exposing them to supreme danger in what concerns the highest interests of their souls. It is not right to call in doubt or to abandon in any way these principles of judging and acting which are founded on truth and justice, and which are the safeguards both of public and private interests."

From this statement the motive underlying the action of the Episcopacy

at the time of the general elections is made apparent to those Catholics who, carried away by political passion, openly criticized their conduct and, what was worse, refused to be guided by their counsel. The Bishops were swayed by no political considerations whatever; they acted simply and solely in the discharge of their duty as pastors responsible for the maintenance and spread of Catholic doctrine and for the safeguarding of the spiritual welfare of the flocks entrusted to their loving care.

What will be the effect of the Holy Father's Encyclical? We cannot doubt that it will result in solidifying the ranks of the Catholics of Canada; that it will cause them to unite in demanding and insisting upon their rights, whether it be in Manitoba or Ontario; that it will fire them with a determination to secure that the rights which they themselves accord to the Protestant minority in Quebec shall also be accorded to the Catholic minority in other provinces. Some weak-kneed, pusillanimous Catholics may object that "circumstances" stand in the way, that we ought to temporize, to compromise, to tolerate, and so forth. We have had enough of that invertebrate sort of policy. What has it done for us? It has caused us to be driven back for years, to keep on retreating like a lot of poltroons frightened to make a stand for our rights. The day has come for a far different policy to be tried. We demand our rights and we must have them.

Opinions of two Anglican Organs on the Encyclical.

The Guardian.

The Pope has given the Roman Catholics of Manitoba, and of Canada generally, some advice which may be equally useful to Churchmen in England. It is true that in Manitoba the Roman Catholics are in some ways worse off than Churchmen are among ourselves. We have our separate schools, which are largely supported by a State grant. They have been deprived of their separate schools, and are practically compelled to send their children to Undenominational schools. On the other hand, in these Undenominational schools the compromise secures to Roman Catholics in Manitoba those facilities for Denominational teaching which Churchmen in England can only enjoy during the pleasure of a School Board. In fact, the situation in Manitoba is less favourable to religion than it is in England in districts where Board and Voluntary schools are equally within reach, and more favourable to religion than it is in England in districts where there are only Board schools. Under these circumstances, the Pope's counsel to his spiritual children is to take all that is offered them, and to go on demanding all that is denied them. This exactly describes the true policy of Churchmen in this country. Make the best of what you have, but do not let this blind you to the importance of securing something better. Get facilities for Church teaching wherever a School Board will give it to you; but leave nothing undone to get the law altered so as to make the concession of these facilities a matter of right and not a favour. The danger of preaching acceptance of the half-loaf is that it may breed contentment with the half-loaf, whereas the true policy is to use the half-loaf simply as a lever for getting the whole loaf by-and-by.

The Church Times.

An Encyclical dealing with the Manitoba school difficulty has at last been issued from Rome, after careful inquiry made by the Papal Alegate, Mgr. Merry del Val. There is no question that the Roman Catholics of the Province of Manitoba have been defrauded of their rights, in spite of the Privy Council judgment, which decided that an appeal justly lay from the Provincial to the Dominion Government. It is true that the so-called Laurier-Greenway Settlement did something for the aggrieved Manitoban Roman Catholics in empowering school trustees to provide a denominational teacher where a sufficient number of parents demanded one. But this concession, such as it was, the Roman prelates in Canada absolutely rejected, and in consequence the Pope

intervened. The Encyclical expresses strong disapproval of the conduct of the Provincial legislature. It condemns the severance of religion from secular instruction, and upholds the Bishops in their resistance to the principles laid down in 1890. At the same time it gives Mr. Laurier, himself a Roman Catholic, credit for his honest desire to do the best for his co-religionists, though it pronounces it inadequate. It concludes by urging the faithful, while accepting such concessions as they can obtain, to work in patience for the object which they have in view, and which in time they may see fulfilled, namely, the full restitution of the rights which they possess, but may not at present exercise.

A matter of translation.

Northwestern.

The Pope's Encyclical on the Manitoba School Question will apparently be differently interpreted according to the manner in which it is translated. The Northwest Review, the local Catholic organ, complains that, of four English versions which have been put forward as official or semi-official, all contain a number of discrepancies, and all more or less, vary from the real meaning of the Latin original. It also refers to errors in the authorized French translation, which it attributes to "the too free-and-easy tendency of French translators." The REVIEW says:—

"An example will make our meaning clear. The Holy Father writes: 'Non sumus nesci, emendari aliquid ex ea lege coeptum.' The other translators write: 'We are not unaware that something has been done to amend the law.' 'The Catholic Times' comes nearer to the original by translating 'some measures have been undertaken.' The Pope 'does not admit that anything has actually been accomplished; he merely acknowledges that something has been begun, aliquid coeptum, and so we translate, 'a beginning has been made of amending something in that law.'"

To some, the Northwest Review's objections may appear hypercritical; but really they are not so. The differences in meaning may have quite an important political significance. To take, for instance, the illustration given. According to the Northwest Review's translation, which really seems to be the correct one, His Holiness understands Mr. Greenway's amendments of last session to the School Act to be merely the beginning of amendments to the public schools law in the interests of the Roman Catholics which are to be continued. His Holiness has, probably, heard of Mr. Greenway's celebrated declaration at Montreal that he would be prepared to make further concessions to the Roman Catholics if the so-called settlement should not prove to work satisfactorily. The fact that the Pope thus expresses himself would also indicate that Sir Wilfrid Laurier probably represented to the Vatican that this so-called settlement was not a finality but was merely the thin end of the wedge of larger concessions.

The Quebec Education Bill Defeated.

The Legislative Council deserves well of the province for having killed the Education Bill. Its action caused no surprise, as it was generally anticipated. There was no valid reason why the bill should have been passed; there were many valid reasons why it should meet with rejection. It was drawn up, as we have already pointed out, in a spirit of hostility towards the Catholic Church. Its real object was to laicize the whole system of primary education in this pre-mi-

nently Catholic province. It jeopardized the interests of primary education by placing them in the hands of a politician who had no special fitness either by training or occupation, or mental habit, to have in his hands complete control of the system. It conferred upon him autocratic powers and reduced the Council of Public Instruction to the position of a merely advisory board. It left undone the only change of which the system stands in need—namely, a substantial increase in the amount of the government grant, especially for schools in poor districts. It aimed at upsetting a system which those acquainted with it, like the Hon. Gedeon Ouimet, declare to be working very well and producing excellent results. The Legislative Council has earned the gratitude of the true friends of education in the province.—TRUE WITNESS.

Moral Hygiene.

Ave Maria.

As a means to check the alarming spread of the suicide mania in Buenos Ayres, the chief of police in that city has issued an order forbidding the commissaries at the various stations to furnish to newspaper reporters any details of suicides. This is a step in the right direction, and all the intelligent citizens of Buenos Ayres have applauded the action. But it is like covering an ulcer with court-plaster: the root of the evil remains untouched. The moral and mental conditions which produce the suicide mania cannot be changed by legislative acts. The Godless system of education introduced into the state schools of the Argentine Republic some years ago is the source of the terrible evil which is now generally deplored.

But suicide is only one of many results of irreligious education; and not the only one that is apparent, especially in the large cities of Argentina. The Southern Cross tells of the shocking increase of child-murder which is accounted for by the widespread relaxation of morals—a direct outcome of Godless education, unclean literature, and licentious journalism. The same paper proposes a remedy, the only effectual one:

"In order to kill the germs of disease all pathologists are unanimous in insisting on the necessity of cleanliness. Hygiene is now the watchword of medical science. It should also be the watchword of modern legislation. Moral cleanliness is what we want here. Let us clear our social ambient of immoral influences and forces. Let us clear our moral atmosphere of licensed vice, of legalized concubinage, of anti-clerical cant, of filthy literature, of Godless education, and with time and patience we may undo, or at least atone for, the ghastly devastation which our devil's dance of the last ten years has wrought in a nationhood won by such heroism and sacrifice of self."

Paragraphs from Father Phelan.

Mivart writes that Huxley always thought that the Pope and the cardinals had the best of the argument with Galileo. This man Galileo had a hole in his astronomical breeches and he wanted to patch it with a leaf from the Bible. The Church forbade and punished the profanation, and she was right.

The Kaiser will get his ships; but their first duty will be to bring the Jesuits back to Germany. The Catholic Church is only another name for the Empire of God over men. She is a conquering Church. Touch a kinky hair of the head of a Catholic African in the heart of the Dark Continent, and ten chances to one you will have to apologize to him before you are done.

Durant is dead at last. The fellow became a Catholic just before he died. Well he knew he was a villain and she was the only Church a villain had anything to hope from. We are not all murderers; but the best of us need the mercy of God as much as Durant did, and that mercy can come only through His Church, The Penitent Thief was as stained with murder as Durant; and he became a Catholic only a few minutes before he died.