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Northwest Review.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4.

CURRENT COMMENT.

School Contamination.

The Honorable Minister of Public Works gave utterance last week to some sentiments which, though they won him momentary applause, can hardly commend themselves to his Catholic brethren. He emphasized his wish—as if it were ours too—that Catholic children should associate at school with Protestant children. Now this is, most emphatically, what Catholic parents want by all means to avoid. It is all very well to talk about the supposed advantage of mingling with other people's children; but no family that respects itself ever countenanced promiscuous contact with any and every other family, and what is true on the score of manners and breeding is still more true in the realm of religion. We Catholics are a religious family, the only one enjoying the possession of the unadulterated truth; we may therefore be compared, without vanity (since we hold this of the mercy of God), to a princely family surrounded by upstarts; though the latter may be very worthy people in their way, the former will keep them at arm's length and will be especially careful that its own children do not associate habitually with the coarser element. Grown up persons well instructed in their religion, and having acquired fixed habits of thought and action, may often, without much danger, mingle with those whose principles of thought and action are fundamentally wrong; but the plastic and imitative mind of the child, in which the senses and the imagination overpower the will, is sure to suffer from intercourse with children whose religion is a mere matter of exterior observance founded upon imaginary history. The danger for Catholic children in public schools arises less from the teachers than from the Protestant pupils. If a teacher should indulge in any bigoted remark about "the errors of the Church of Rome," he would very likely be hauled over the coals by some one; but who can prevent the bitter taunt, the stinging innendo, the cruel sneer, the brutal insult from a Protestant to a Catholic child on the way to and from school? Those Catholics who have attended public schools in places where Catholics were a small minority understand what we mean. Happy is the brave boy who has met such cowardly treatment with a knock-down blow; he has probably saved himself from it in future. But many, unfortunately the great majority of boys and girls, are not morally brave, and this majority are sure to have their faith either undermined or at least tarnished by the gibes of their ignorant and prejudiced Protestant schoolmates.

Notable Exceptions.

It may be objected that some Catholics who have been educated in Protestant schools have come out of them scath-

less. We doubt very much if any Catholic educated wholly in Protestant schools ever issued from them a true Catholic. If any one did, it must have been because the high moral tone and strong Catholic spirit of a really intellectual home counteracted the subtle poison of an heretical atmosphere. But how few are so happily circumstanced! How many are the children of well meaning but uninstructed parents, whose moral influence suffers from the limitations of their own culture! Another answer to the objection is that most of those Catholics who have not suffered permanent mental and moral injury from school intercourse with non-Catholic children have afterwards studied in Catholic colleges or convents where supernatural thoughts and sacramental life are met at every turn. Perhaps they themselves are apt to forget how their subsequent Catholic training was an antidote to their early Protestant surroundings; but, if they reflect on the difference between a public school where even the name of God must be mentioned with an apologetic inflection, and a Catholic school where all the children have at one time or another probed the inmost recesses of their consciences and turned really to God with their whole heart, they will readily acknowledge that their exceptional immunity from Protestant contagion is not in the least attributable to the harmlessness of the public school. Its real cause is the Catholic atmosphere in which they moved, the atmosphere of heavenly hopes and aims, of familiarity with things supernatural, of self-examination, humility, confession and Holy Communion; and this atmosphere, in the case of children who have nothing but a public school training, is always dangerously attenuated, and, in the case of those whose home opportunities are slight, is absolutely nil.

The Sore Spot.

On the 29th ult., Dr. Brett called the attention of the Northwest Assembly to Father Leduc's pamphlet on the Schools. "The position the author occupied in his church," said the member for Banff, "the fact that he was delegated by that church to issue a pamphlet of that kind, and that he had been one of the Council of Education of the Territories, all entitled the publication of the pamphlet to some consideration." After this polite preamble the Doctor proceeded to say that he was not in sympathy with the general character of the pamphlet. However he did not pretend to be sufficiently well informed to deal with the details of Father Leduc's work. There was only one point on which he made bold to say that the premises were entirely unfounded; he meant "those referring to a certain secret society." This, of course, means Freemasonry, which Father Leduc charged with being the prime mover of all the persecution of Catholic schools in the Northwest. Premier Haultain, whom it was evidently Dr. Brett's appointed task to draw out, also referred to "a certain secret society." This studious avoidance of the word "Freemasonry" which Father Leduc uses over and over again would be funny were it not indicative of the prevailing conspiracy of silence. Mr. Haultain "did not pretend to be a high official of any secret society"—those who figure publicly as high officials are generally not the ruling spirits, Mr. Haultain—but he could say that no secret society had ever approached him, and could have no weight with him if they did, in regard to moulding any policy he should pursue. Mr. Haultain thus indirectly admits that he is a Freemason; all he denies is that he is a high official; and being a Freemason he does not need to be 'approached'; he is always there to be told what he ought to do. His protestation about no secret society having any weight with him is all moonshine and suggests the question 'Why, then, do you continue to belong to it?' Mr. J. Lestock Reid, member for Prince Albert, spoke of Father Leduc's attacks

on "an honorable and ancient society," always without naming it, said the heir apparent was at its head—only a figurehead, a royal tool, Mr. Reid—and wondered at its being now "charged with coming down to mean political tricks." It is charged with much worse than that, with deliberately undermining Christianity. Mr. Bannerman (Calgary) also claimed fellowship "with the secret society referred to," always nameless, as if it was, as it really is, a hideous thing of evil, and averred that the word "Catholic" was never used in its meetings. Either this assertion is true, and then Mr. Bannerman has, from his own point of view, violated his oath of secrecy, or it is not true, and then he has been merely using the ordinary weapon of a secret society, mendacious denial. These repeated denials, coming from so many members of the Northwest assembly, point to the soreness of the spot which Father Leduc has fearlessly touched. "Not guilty" is the criminal's usual plea.

The Policy of Denial.

The policy of denial was, however, not confined to the question of Masonic influence. Mr. Haultain said that the "conversations alleged to have taken place with him, with officials of the department and with members of the house, so far as reported in the pamphlet, never did take place." At first sight this looks like a direct attack on Father Leduc's veracity, especially when coupled with Mr. Haultain's assertion that "anything from Father Leduc must be extravagant." But, on closer inspection, the assertion admits of a diplomatic interpretation in the sense that certain expressions, which the Premier calls "Broken English," were not used by Father Leduc's interlocutors. The conversations were substantially as Father Leduc reported them; but the "broken English" was Father Leduc's own and is taken to vitiate all the rest. This is, at best, a quibble like Mr. Haultain's recent subterfuge about Catholics being represented on the Council of Public Instruction (without a vote). The Free Press report says that the Premier gave full details of the cases quoted by Father Leduc, but omits mention of any of these 'full details.' We should be curious to know how Mr. Haultain disposes of the objections against Buckley and Robertson's History of England so categorically drawn up, with quotations and references, by Father Sinnett, Mr. Reginald Rimmer, Mr. Bourgeois and Mr. McCarthy. Neither Mr. Haultain's nor Mr. Goggin's "point blank" and "straight denials" will have much weight with Catholics and with those honest Protestants who have met Father Leduc and know him to be the exact opposite of a man addicted to extravagant assertions. He is a most matter-of-fact, unimaginative person, as accurate as he is sincere. This plea of extravagance betrays the weakness of Mr. Haultain's case. The fact that his 'full details' are carefully suppressed in the report proves how impotent was his reply. We need not stay to defend Father Leduc against the indirect charge of mendacity which is Mr. Haultain's only defence; the Reverend Father is quite able to prove that he is worthy of the position of Vicar General which he occupies in his church, as Dr. Brett remarked, and we understand that he is about to produce a few more facts which, though they may not "convince a fool against his will," will carry conviction to unprejudiced minds.

A Wonderful Treat.

Professor Edward B. Warman is giving a series of entertainments the like of which it has never been the privilege of a Winnipeg audience to witness. His two lectures on the Delsarte philosophy of expression were eminently suggestive and practical. He is not only an all-round elocutionist, perfect in enunciation, graceful and natural in carriage and gesture but he is a genuine and singularly gifted man

physically, mentally and morally. There is about him none of that itching for applause which somewhat marred the otherwise interesting delivery of Christie Murray. Many of Mr. Warman's happy hits and gems of elocution are too subtle and penetrating to be answered by noisy acclaim; they elicit a response too real and deep for words or hand-clapping. His humor is delightful. Of course not a few of his finest points just clear the tops of many heads in even a select Winnipeg audience; and yet all are fascinated by the resistless charm of his manner.

HON. MR. TARTE.

His Visit to Winnipeg and Vicinity.

He Declares he is a Catholic by Accident and that Catholic Schools Cannot be Restored.

He Hopes to see Catholic Children Attending the Public Schools.

Hon. Mr. Tarte left for the West on Friday. He spent upwards of a week in the City and neighbourhood, and besides transacting considerable departmental business attended a few public functions at which he gave expression to his views regarding the future of this country, and, without saying anything definite, hinted at the treatment Manitoba and the West may expect to receive at the hands of the new Government. He did not guarantee that the locks at St. Andrew's Rapids would be built, but he promised favorable consideration adding that the Government intended to stay in power as long as they can, from which we gather that this desire will largely influence them in deciding what public works shall be carried out. He spoke vaguely of immigration, of the Hudson's Bay Railway, of the tariff, his remarks on these matters tending to confirm the general opinion that the Government have not decided what course they will take, and will not until they have sized up all the effects their action is likely to have on their own future. We are not disposed to find fault with them for taking time before finally dealing with these questions, for they are all important and must be carefully considered. But last, although by no means least, Mr. Tarte had a lot to say on the school question. The first occasion on which he publicly referred to it was at the banquet where, replying to the toast of his health, he declared, after highly eulogizing Mr. Joseph Martin and all his works, that he came to this country the bearer of a message of peace. He wished to see Catholics and Protestants live together here in harmony and one of the best means to attain that end was to give up differing over the school question and agree to a settlement whereby all the children could be educated together. After all they would see on reflection there was no reason why this should not be done, for the only difference between himself and the bulk of his hearers (Mr. Joseph Martin for one, we presume) was that he was a Catholic by accident and they were Protestants by accident—his parents having happened to be Catholics and theirs Protestants—therefore it only needed a very little arrangement to have one system of schools in which all their children could be educated together. Without being very clear as to what he meant he added a few words about the beauty of the French language, and also about an hour or two per week being given, if desired by parents, to religious training. This accurately summarizes his remarks and he evidently intended to convey the impression that it was upon these lines that the two Governments had decided to arrange the matter. There were Catholics—a few of them—at the banquet, and they listened to this speech without a word of protest, indeed for all we know they joined in the applause with which it was greeted. The second public occasion on which Mr. Tarte dealt with the school question was at a reception tendered him by the Liberals of St. Boniface, but here all was not so harmonious as at the Banquet, for

we learn on good authority that the audience received his announcement very coldly and went so far as to let him see in an unmistakable way that his scheme for the settlement of the difficulty was not approved by them, and so far as they were concerned they would be no party to such a base surrender of that which the Catholics of the Province have been struggling for for six long years. Next we hear of Mr. Tarte at St. Norbert where he again in the same veiled way announced that Catholics could not expect to have their separate schools restored and that all they may look for is the right to educate their children in the public schools alongside the children of their Protestant neighbours, under the same regulations, but with a provision providing for a certain number of Catholic teachers and a few hours set apart each week for religious training. This by no means pleased his hearers who presented him with an address in which they roundly took him to task for suggesting a course which would sacrifice the interests of his co-religionists in this country. They further declared that they were determined to have Catholic schools or nothing, and reminded Mr. Tarte that some few years ago when the Conservatives were dealing with the question he had himself sent a message to the people here to stand firm and to accept nothing but their full rights. They had done this hitherto and they did not propose to change their attitude simply because there had been a change of government. Mr. Tarte replied by blaming the clergy for keeping up the agitation. The last public appearance of Mr. Tarte which we are aware of was at the Collegiate department of the public school system and at the Euclid street public school. He went to these institutions with Mr. John O'Donohue and the fellow-members of the Public School Board and at both places he inspected the work and made a speech. In the course of his remarks at the collegiate he expressed his delight at what he had seen and heard, and again declared it was a pity such schools were not attended by Catholic as well as by Protestant children. This was a state of things he hoped to assist in bringing about, for there was no reason why Roman Catholics and Protestants should not walk together in childhood as they have to in after life. His concluding words were: "My young friends, I bid you good bye and I hope the next time I visit Winnipeg I shall find in these halls Roman Catholics and Protestants working hand in hand." Having closed his visit here the party proceeded to the Euclid street school where the children were put through a physical drill and other movements by Principal John Mulvey, and Mr. Tarte again expressed himself in much the same terms as before. Right across the road, within a stone-throw of where Mr. Tarte was visiting is a Catholic school where the Catholic children of the neighbourhood were at that very moment being instructed by the good Sisters and receiving from them not only a thorough education in secular subjects but also that moral training which is so necessary to their full and perfect development. Now if Mr. Tarte's various speeches mean anything at all they mean that it is his desire to see this and all our other excellent Catholic schools snuffed out of existence entirely and our little ones removed from the tender, loving and watchful care of the nuns and the brothers to be placed under the guidance of such teachers as that bright particular star, Principal John Mulvey, who is best known in the City as a worthy son of that brave, gallant and patriotic member of the Local Legislative and loyal orangeman Mayor Stewart Mulvey, who not many months ago declared on the floor of the house that he would shoulder his musket if necessary to prevent Catholics from enjoying their rights regarding education. It is under such teachers and out of books prescribed by a Protestant school board that Mr. Tarte, it seems, would wish to have the Catholic children of the City educated, and what is far worse, this is not only Mr. Tarte's personal wish but it is apparently what he looks forward to as the result