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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

Mr. Synnott's letter to the London Tablet, of which we reproduce a portion on our first page, gives a most remarkable list of distinguished alumni from one single Catholic College in England. The institution to which he alludes, without naming it, is, as every well-informed English Catholic knows, the famous Jesuit college of Stonyhurst. The "Parliamentary orator second to none" is, of course, Richard Lalor Sheil, the "naturalist of European fame" is Charles Waterton, and the "newly-appointed Ambassador to Russia," Sir Roderick O'Connor. Mr. Synnott might also have instanced, as living alumni trained at Stonyhurst, His Eminence Cardinal Vaughan and the cultured editor to whom he was writing.

Both Lord Brayne and Mr. Costelloe had been doing what so many of our critics in Canada delight in, they had been venturing to pass judgment on matters of which they were profoundly ignorant. Neither of them had "been amongst the taught in any Catholic college." Just in the same way here, men who have never seen the inside of a Catholic school are ever ready to carp at Catholic methods of education. Unfortunately a few superficial Catholics, with their imaginations unduly excited by baseless anti-Catholic slanders and their intellects fuddled by public school surface cramming, chime in with the shallow but pretentious crowd of non-Catholic sciclists.

A personage, from whom one would expect better things, is reported to have said lately that education in the Province of Quebec is two centuries behind the age. Well, even if it were, provided it were Catholic, it would be better than the best Protestant education in the world. The French nation of two hundred years ago was, on the whole, much better educated than any Protestant nation of the present day. Doubtless, educated Protestants of our day know more facts about matter and material things, geography, current events, philology, etc.; but their knowledge is not digested, not systematized as was the thought of Louis XIV's age; modern Protestant education distinctly fails in cultivating the judgment, that master-faculty that weighs evidence on both sides of every question and seizes the strong point in each.

A mere knowledge of facts without great ideas to marshal and co-ordinate them is like a wild undisciplined mob, fearfully destructive but powerless for good. This sort of training, universal in the most modern non-Catholic schools

and universities, produces, not a cultivated, but a dissipated and enfeebled mind, and explains the consequent spread of that extreme intellectual weakness—unbelief. Men lose all sense of perspective, and attach as much importance to the unproved assertion of a bold scoundrel as to the logical argument of a self-denying Christian. If this is the ideal of the personage we allude to above, we readily grant that the province of Quebec does not come down to it; but in the spread of great ideas among the people, such as the supreme importance of obedience to God's will, and in the judicial temper of its educated men, who, by the way, are more numerous than in any other part of this continent, it is not only up to date but a good deal above the average of contemporary America. The proof is to be found in the admitted superiority of so many of our French Canadian parliamentary debaters and in the remarkable utterances of such judicial luminaries as Judge Doherty (of St. Mary's College, Montreal) in his celebrated Canada-Revue judgment and Judge Matthieu (of St. Hyacinthe College) in his recent masterly analysis of the conflicting evidence as to the sanity of Shortis. The system that produces such men is surely not behind the age.

In publishing the Rev. Dr. Gladden's rectification of certain Protestant misrepresentations we need hardly say that we do not stand sponsor for the errors with which he unwittingly interlards his splendid defence of the invocation of saints and the doctrine of indulgences. What he says of Christian Fellowship shows that for him, as for all thoughtful Protestants, there is no absolute truth. He "does not mean that he thinks Protestants are right in everything" and "that their system is wholly good." We, on the contrary, most emphatically think that the Catholic Church is right in every one of her articles of faith, and that her system is wholly good. He thinks Protestants are "a good deal nearer right" than we are. With him it is a question of approaching, without ever reaching, the whole truth. For us, we thank God that we are in the certain enjoyment of unadulterated truth. However, we fully agree with Dr. Gladden's exhortation to justice, generosity and kindness. Only, it so happens that most Catholics are never tempted to sin against these virtues in dealing with Protestants. Sincerely as we may detest their errors, we have no quarrel with persons who may be, for aught we know, the unconscious victims of ignorance and prejudice.

In our article "A plea for secular schools" will be found, quoted from a letter in the Regina Leader, a passage which contains more false principles to the square inch than anything of the kind we have come across for many a day. These errors are noted as they occur. One of them, however, deserves insistent iteration. It is the supposition, underlying the whole letter, that purely secular schools are a lesser evil, in the eyes of Catholics, than Protestant schools. This amounts to supposing that unbelief is a lesser evil than misbelief, that the exclusion of God is better than a false notion of his religion. Thus stated, the proposition refutes itself. Obviously, it is infinitely better to be a Protestant with wrong ideas of Christianity than to be a freethinker. The latter is a consummate fool, the former is only a misguided seeker after truth. By encouraging a taste for schools in which the First of all causes is systematically ignored, Freemasonry not only saps the very foundations of Christianity under every shape and form, but stunts and warps the reasoning faculty in the rising generation.

Ex-sheriff Richard's "Acadia," which we noticed last June, is being favorably received by many influential newspapers and reviews in Canada and the United States. Not to speak of a very creditable article in the Tribune of this city, nor of most of the French Canadian organs, we read with pleasure the high encomium bestowed upon the book by Mr. Hazeltine, the famous reviewer of the New York Sun. But by far the best

account of this great work appeared in the Toronto Globe of the 19th ult. This review is itself beautifully written by one who has evidently studied up the question in all its ramifications. He concludes his five-column notice with this regretful remark: "There are a thousand things that one wishes to say about this book; points to bring out which emphasize the malice of those detractors it has been written to expose, but not less than a volume of comments would suffice."

The same reviewer says at the outset: "The book is more fascinating and more stirring than any romance. It approaches in length nearly a thousand pages, large octavo, and, though the author's purpose is anything but to please, the interest intensifies with the theme's progression. The style is copious and exuberant, and possesses both grace and lucidity. In the thought of the author it has probably a subordinate place, but it is fitting that so worthy an object should be clothed in so attractive a way. Every line is instinct with the intensity of his feeling, almost distressing in its communicability, held for the most part well in hand, but breaking out now and then in a glow of indignant wrath the reader is not slow to appreciate."

IS IT POSSIBLE?

We have long ago learned to hold in contempt the subserviency of politicians to their party. We have witnessed the readiness with which they sacrifice every principle of right conduct and conscience to the exigencies of the party. With them it is seldom a question of what is right and best for the country. Before party interests all must give way. It matters little to the politician what wrongs may be perpetrated on the weak; what injustice may be inflicted, or what good impaired, provided those interests be served. And these remarks apply to all parties. The spectacle is not one that is calculated to elevate our opinion of ourselves and our institutions. Probably the fault is more with ourselves than with the politicians. A pure and high-minded electorate would very soon give us pure and high-minded politicians. The politician is made either pure and honorable, or venal and corrupt, just as the one or the other course meets with the public approval. He is almost always guided by self-interest, but scarcely ever by principle. Hence it is that we find in public life so many demagogues, who care little for the principles of right government, or any other principles except self-interest. These men are ever ready to advocate any fad, to put forward any theory, to excite any passions, to create any discord, to perpetrate any injustice, to do any wrong without regard to consequences, provided their own interests be secured. They are patriots, if patriotism will best serve their purposes; but if treason to the law and the constitution of the country is more helpful to them, then treason it must be.

Familiar as these facts are to the most casual observer, we were somewhat surprised to read in the public press the statement of Mr. Joseph Martin, M. P., that these gentlemen carried their political animosities into private life. According to the member for Winnipeg, it is an offence against party politics for the people's representatives to be gentlemen, or at least to act towards each other as gentlemen should. Mr. Martin says: "A member of one party would not smoke a cigar with a member of the other party, in fact they could scarcely take a drink with each other." He adds: "There were but few exceptions to this rule." This is a terrible indictment to make against our representatives in parliament, and if it is as generally true as Mr. Martin would have us believe, it certainly is not creditable to the intelligence or the good sense of our representatives. Of course we can easily understand that in a large representative body, like the Canadian House of Commons, there would always be found some disagreeable, and, possibly, mean men, who would make it the one object of their existence to pry into not only the public, but even the private life of a political opponent, impute to him dishonorable motives, and charge him with deeds that

had no foundation except in the mean accuser's own corrupt imagination. We can readily understand men with gentlemanly and refined instincts, or generous and kind feelings, avoiding the companionship of such men; but, for the representative members of the two great political parties, who should be possessed of good common sense and sufficient culture to make them companionable, to deliberately avoid each other, or treat each other as social enemies, is something difficult to understand. We quite agree with the member for Winnipeg when he says: "This intense partisanship was a great mistake."

"A PLEA FOR SECULAR SCHOOLS."

Under the above reading, the Regina Leader has a letter signed "Fair Play," in which the writer sets up the plea of a purely secular school system as a cure for "all the sectarian and political strife which is being aroused over the Manitoba school question." The writer begins with an assertion the fairness of which no sane man will deny: "It is certainly an injustice to impose Protestant schools upon the minority," but when he says that "they ought to have separate schools, or the system ought to be secularized," we must take exception to this later alternative.

Most people will acknowledge that it is unjust to make Catholics support a Protestant school system such as we have in Manitoba; but it would also be unjust to force Catholics to support another system of schools that is still more objectionable to them. Smoked ham, as an article of diet, is conscientiously objectionable to Jews; but pork pure and simple is equally objectionable and would not be accepted by our Israelite population as a compromise. For a similar reason secular schools could not be made acceptable to Catholics as a compromise for Protestant ones.

The writer says that if the schools were secularized it would prevent any more Federal interference, because neither Grit nor Tory would dare to meddle with a law which gave equal rights and impartial justice to all. He supposes an equality that does not exist. Secular schools are unobjectionable to a very large number of Protestants who, whatever their sentiments may be, always accept such schools and send their children to them, rather than support religious schools, while Catholics never did, nor never will accept these schools, when it is possible to maintain, even at large financial loss, Catholic schools. This shows that "Fair Play" is very far astray when he calls such a compromise, "equal rights and impartial justice to all."

But these are not the only illogical and untenable arguments of "Fair Play." Further on, he says:

"Every vestige of religion must be removed from the school and all children placed upon the same footing; every child is a ward of the state, and it is incumbent upon the state to provide the children with such an education as will fit them to become good and useful citizens. This can be done without making any allusion to religion. The sciences are all secular. There is no such thing as Catholic chemistry and Protestant physics. In other words no religion has anything to do with facts. The facts are all secular; the sciences are all of this world."

In these few short sentences, "Fair Play" gives us ample evidence of his shallow notions of what an education should be. To place children on the same footing, every vestige of religion must be removed. And yet, he says, it is incumbent upon the state to provide the children with such an education as will fit them to become GOOD AND USEFUL CITIZENS! Although he boldly tells us: "This can be done without making any allusion to religion," he does not tell us how to do it. How the state can turn out "good and useful citizens" without teaching them morality; or how morality can be efficiently taught without the aid of religion, which is the very foundation of all morality and goodness, is entirely ignored by this writer. Chemistry and Physics, no more than reading, writing and arithmetic, are not the only things that go to make up the education of a child. They may help to develop

the intellect of the child; but they can never develop his moral nature, nor teach him his moral obligations to his neighbor, to the state or to God, the Author of his being. This can be done only by teaching him the laws of God, or in other words, by the aid of religion. Besides, chemistry and physics may easily be made a vehicle for antichristian teaching.

He says: "Every child is the ward of the state." This, in the sense in which he uses it, is equally false. In the first place the child is the creature of God, who has destined him for a higher and nobler end than a mere ward of any state; and being destined for that higher life, it is a most cruel and unjust thing for any state or any individual to interpose its authority to deprive that child of the happiness for which he was created. It is not only a crime against the child; it is a crime against his Creator. The child is the ward of his parents, not of the state. No civilization, based upon Christianity, or the laws of justice, would dare to interpose the authority of the state as against that of the parents, nor would any civilized code permit the state to usurp the God-given rights of the parents, so long as these parents do not forfeit their rights by unnatural neglect of their duties.

But this writer gives us the key to all his blunders when he says: "In other words no religion has anything to do with facts. The facts are all secular; the sciences are all of this world." Indeed! What is a fact? A fact is a reality; a truth. Is not God a Fact, a Reality, a Truth? Is not Theology the science of sciences? And yet this man tells us that: "The facts are all secular; the sciences are all of this world!" Probably the ignoramus who makes these astounding statements has received his education in a secular school, from which "every vestige of religion was removed." Who can doubt it, after reading the few short sentences quoted by us from his letter, which, by the way, teems with such "arguments" throughout? Who can wonder at Catholics making any sacrifice rather than allow their children to enter schools which produce such "men of light and leading" as "Fair Play?" "It is certainly an injustice to impose Protestant schools upon the minority;" but it is still more unjust and unfair to impose upon them a school in which their children are taught that religion has nothing to do with facts; that facts are all secular; and that the sciences are all of this world, and, therefore, that the knowledge of God, the Creator and Ruler of all things, the very Essence of all science, all knowledge, is not essential to education.

The letter, though dated from Woodstock, Ont., is published in a Regina paper, where sits enthroned, the Past Grand Master of the Masonic sect, and the grand ruler of the educational destinies of the Northwest Territories of Canada. This looks very suspicious, especially, as every one knows, the chief aim of that sect, however much it may seek to disguise the fact, is to dethrone Jesus Christ, ignore His authority, dishonor His Church and defy His laws. What surer way of accomplishing its design than to secularize the schools and corrupt the morals of His little ones?

A Touching Scene.

On last Thursday morning there occurred in St. Mary's church one of these touching and to the Catholic heart, most pleasing incidents. The children of St. Mary's school for boys, and of the Holy Angel's school for girls, had just completed their retreat and were assembled in St. Mary's Church for the final closing of these happy days, by receiving Holy Communion in a body. His Grace, our dearly beloved Archbishop, who is so devoted to the little ones of his flock, was the celebrant of the Mass. At the close of the gospel His Grace addressed a few very appropriate remarks to the children, telling them how devoted and grateful they should be to their teachers and with what love and devotion they should receive our Blessed Lord. The large number of boys and girls who came up to the Holy Table must have been a great source of consolation to their devoted teachers and pastor as well as to our beloved Archbishop. After the Mass was over His Grace again addressed the