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Patent Compressible Religion.

The Casket.

Two Anglican Synods, those of the dioceses of Huron and Niagara, sitting respectively at London and Hamilton, Ontario, recently passed resolutions on the question of religion in the schools. Judging from the meagre press reports we have seen, what they appear to want—or at least what they would be satisfied with—is common instruction based on the Bible, supplemented by "the Creed, the Lord's prayer and the Ten commandments." In other words, they would be content with what Lord Salisbury so happily describes as "a patent compressible religion that can be forced into all consciences with very little squeezing." It is true that one of the resolutions calls for a half-hour's daily instruction by the clergy of the various denominations; but the former is to supplant it and to be substituted for it where the latter is not practicable.

Now the utter futility of this plan has been so often demonstrated that it would be a waste of time to repeat the demonstration. We would ask our Anglican friends one question, however: Do they propose that the children shall learn the Creed for example parrot-fashion, or that they should be taught its meaning? None of them, we take it, will advocate the former plan, or will venture to say that there is any real teaching in making a child learn mechanically a set form of words. If, then, the child is to be taught the meaning of those words, what explanation is to be given for instance of this doctrine of the Creed "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church"? There is certainly not more, and there is probably much less, difference between Protestantism and Mohammedanism in their general teaching than there is between Protestantism and Catholicism in their doctrines regarding this article. Is it, then, in the teaching of this patent compressible religion, to be expunged from the Creed, or to be passed over in silence, or to be explained according to the Protestant system? And prescinding from the fundamental objection, that the very assumption to teach religion of any one not authorized thereto by the Church is a sweeping denial of the whole of her claims, what, we ask, is to be done in the hundred other cases where the two systems are wide as the poles asunder? No concrete human being could give five minutes' explanation of the First Commandment without trenching upon a three-centuries-old-battle-ground between Catholicism and Protestantism. Let Protestants, if they will, unite upon this patent religion. Their differences among themselves are comparatively slight: our differences from them are fundamental; and we cannot subject our religion to the process of compression. We commend to the Anglicans of London and Hamilton the practical conclusion of the Bishop of their own Church at Ottawa that only by denominational schools can religious teaching for the young be secured.

There are two opposite errors, equally unreasonable, regarding religion in the school room. There is first the view of those who think that the religion needed there is pure sentiment, having nothing whatever to do with any doctrine. These befogged mortals, to whose ranks belongs a prominent Nova Scotia politician

who has essayed the discussion of this subject, think that the young can be taught to love God without being taught that there is a God to love. Then there is the notion of those whose view of religion's place in the school-room is that it should have a definite time assigned to it on the curriculum, just like geography, the teacher to give a lesson in it and then to put it away for the rest of the day. These do not appear to regard religion as having anything to do with conduct. Now the Catholic view of the province of religion in the school-room is that, while it should, like grammar, have its place in the time-table, its precepts should pervade the intire work of the school as those of grammar pervade the expression of thought therein. No half hour, or hour, therefore, of religious instruction, even if given by a priest, will, when religion is banished from the remainder of the school day, ever satisfy a true Catholic parent. As Goldwin Smith says: "The thoroughly devout Catholic no mere safeguards, or hours reserved for doctrinal teaching; will entirely satisfy. He wants the Catholic atmosphere the Catholic surroundings. He wants the child's whole life moulded upon the Catholic model." The Casket.

"LA PRESSE" Protestiant Tolerance

(The Casket.)

A few months ago there was a crusade in Montreal against indecent posters advertising certain theatriquet performances. At that time "La Presse" was daily notifying its readers of the presence at one of the theaters of a company which respectable Bostonians consider the disgrace of their city. So it was not difficult to guess where the inaccnt posters came from. The dramatic critic of the paper mentioned thought it was his duty to offer a feeble remonstrance in the following terms: "If we may be permitted, we desire to say that some of the actors border a little too closely on the vulgar. . . . Let them remove some songs which are a little too airy and certain gestures which are altogether out of place, and no one will have a word to say."

A couple of weeks ago I saw billed in the columns of the same journal a performance at the same theatre of one of the most notoriously indecent pieces which our very broad toleration allows to be played upon the stage. I have frequently heard its character commented upon by those who were by no means prudish. On this occasion several additional attractions had been inserted into the original piece, among them a burlesque on the infamous Seeley dinner, which created such sensation in New York last winter. This time not even a feeble remonstrance is uttered by "La Presse." Yet it is a journal controlled by Catholics; it is not published on holydays of obligation; it devotes a great deal of attention to religious matters. It is nothing short of a disgrace that it should admit to its columns advertisements of an immoral character—for such the advertisements referred to are in reality. No doubt the publisher does it simply as a matter of business. Well, the "Star" has just as keen an eye to business as "La Presse", yet the name of the theatre to which I have referred is never found either in its advertising or its news columns. "La Presse boasts of a larger circulation than the "Star," therefore it can even better afford to reject all ill-gotten gains.

Often, when the attitude of the Catholic clergy toward the public

school system is being criticized as unpatriotic, I have wondered what course of conduct would meet with the approbation of the critics. It is therefore with a great deal of pleasure that I have lately read some notes written by Principal Grant of Queen's University on the state of the United Kingdom as he saw it during his latest visit. Speaking of the progress of education in Scotland, Dr. Grant informs us with charming frankness that the national schools of that country might just as well be called Presbyterian as national, since the Bible and the Shorter Catechism are taught therein. Yet they are supported by taxes paid by members of every religious denomination. With regard to the attitude of the Catholic clergy to these schools he says: "Everywhere, so far as I could learn, the priests take a healthy interest in the Board schools; they are elected to the Boards, and, by means of the cumulative vote, they are often at the head of the poll in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and elsewhere. They work cordially on Boards with the other members and take their full share of committee work, the department of religious instruction always excepted. They make no claim for a share of the rates, being satisfied apparently with the small Government per capita grant, though their people have to pay the rates levied for the Board schools, and to contribute, in addition, out of their poverty to build and maintain Church schools." And this attitude Dr. Grant calls "admirable"! Evidently this is his ideal school system—the public schools to be thoroughly Presbyterian, supported in part by the compulsory contributions of Catholics, and no opposition to this state of things offered by the Catholic clergy. The worthy Principal rubs his hands in glee at the spectacle; "Even a hierarchy feels it to be useless to contend against such forces," he chuckles, "and therefore its wise men do not waste their strength in vain contentings, but accept the inevitable and give their own contribution to making the educational system as good as possible." Then remembering the man who began the revolution which has reached this happy consummation, by undermining the authority of his lawful sovereign, in a burst of exultation he exclaims, "The work of John Knox has not been in vain!"

It is sometimes said in defence of the religious intolerance of Protestants that it was a peculiar product of the troublous times when the new doctrines were struggling for their life, but that it no longer exists. There is difficulty in upholding this theory in the face of the facts above stated. In the eyes of some of the most liberal-minded Protestants to-day, the solution of the vexed question of common school education is this: "Where the majority, even to the extent of 95 per cent, of the ratepayers are Catholics, there shall be common schools in which no religious teaching shall be given. Where the majority of the ratepayers are Protestants there shall be common schools in which such religious teaching shall be given as is desired by the said majority of ratepayers. In both cases Catholics desiring religious schools for their children, shall support them at their own expense, as such schools shall not receive any aid from the State." This is what Protestant toleration amounts to in practice, whatever it may be in theory.

A Successful Year.

Closing Exercises and Distribution of Prizes at the I.C. Catholic School

The most successful year in the history of the Immaculate Conception Catholic school, Point Douglas, was brought to a

close on the 17th inst. The annual examination of the pupils took place on the previous day, and those who were present on the occasion were more than surprised at the results, the high standards obtained being all the more remarkable in view of the fact that the sisters who have charge of the school have to deal with pupils not only of all ages, but of many nationalities and various tongues. The closing exercises of Thursday were of a most pleasing nature, the children carrying out a difficult programme, comprising vocal and instrumental music recitations and dialogues in a manner that not only pleased the parents and friends who were present in large numbers but which would have delighted any audience that could have gathered in the city, and would have done credit to even the most pretentious of our educational establishments. An important feature on this occasion was the presentation of prizes in the shape of medals and books presented by friends of the school and awarded as follows:

Religious instruction—First course—1st prize, Harold Hinds; 2nd Martha Welnitz. Third course—1st prize, Annie Peterman and Mary M. McInnis; 2nd Mary Casey.

Good conduct and application—Senior class—1st prize, silver medal, Dora Hinds; 2nd G. Laughman. Junior class—1st prize, Adelina Lauzon; 2nd Annita Federaska.

Regular attendance—1st prize, Dora Hinds and William Markinski; 2nd, Ethel McDonald; 3rd, Emma and Adelina Lauzon.

Instrumental music—1st prize silver medal, Laura Landers; 2nd, Emma Lauzon, 3rd, Adelina Lauzon.

Vocal music—1st prize, Henrica Boes; 2nd, Cecilia Jones; 3rd Edna Landers; 4th, May McDonald.

Mathematics—Senior class—1st, prize Dora Hinds; 2nd Irene Connell; 3rd, C. Jones. Junior class—1st prize, W Markinski; 2nd, Leo Russell.

Penmanship, Senior class—first prize, Gertrude McManus; 2nd, Harold Hinds. Junior class—first prize, Leo Russell; 2nd, Mary Bayliss; 3rd Mary Barry.

Household order, senior class—first prize, Bernadette Lalonde; 2nd, Mary Schmidt; 3rd, Jane Harrington. Junior class—first prize, B. Casey; 2nd, L. Nagen-gast.

Class prizes for excellence of general work during the year were awarded the following: Dora Hinds, Gertrude McManus, Irene Connell, Laura Landers, Emma Lauzon, Harold Hinds, Henrica Boes, Joseph Picard, Helen Tobin, Ethel McDonald, May McDonald, Gertrude Laughman, Cecilia Jones, Jane Harrington, Charlotte Harrington, Mary Federaska, Edna Landers, Ernest Fahey, Bernadette Lalonde, James Barry, Mary Schmidt, Martha Welnitz, Oclylia Czerigiewz, Assa Hendrick, Annie Peterman, William Markinski, Leo Russell, Adelina Lauzon, Mary Casey, Mary McInnis, Adelina Lalonde, Frank Bayliss, Mary Bayliss, Anita Federaska, Louise Nagen-gast, Michael Barry, Mary Yestatt, John Fairbanks, Mary Welnitz, Henry Boes, Rose McDonald J. B. Lauzon, Emily McNeill, and Francis Ducowe. — FREE PRESS.

Dr. F. X. and Mrs. Demers and Miss Dora Richer, of St. Anne des Chenes were guests last week of Mr George Germain, Lily Street.

St. Mary's Schools.

Charming Exercises at the Academy The Lieutenant-Governor Presiding Boys School in the Evening.

Nor'Wester.

A pretty scene was that of the distribution of premiums on the 21 inst. to the pupils of St. Mary's academy by Lieut.-Governor Patterson. On entering the doorway of this haven of purity and youth, the ears of the scribe were greeted with soft strains of melody. In an entranced condition, he was led through dim, cool corridors, between rows of sombre but smiling sisters, to a room whence the angelic music issued and immediately sank in a state of ecstasy on the nearest seat. On opening his eyes he very nearly had a relapse at the sight of the concourse of maiden forms, all clad in glimmering white. In front were a few of the elder angels, discoursing sweet music from the strings of mandolins and guitars. Anon there was a pause, and the entranced one found, by the cheerful chatter that forthwith arose, that they were only human beings in the similitude of angels. He was beginning to recover, when the bevy of beauty arose, whether by the agency of wings, or mere human means he knew not, to greet the entrance of the Lieutenant-Governor, attended by Lieut.-Col. Codd to the accompaniment of more seraphic music. With him, too, were Father Chartier rector of St. Boniface, Father Drummond, Fathers Guillet, McCarthy and George; two brothers from St. Mary's, Judges Dubuc and Prudhomme and Father Cherrier of the Immaculate Conception. Then stepped forward the sweetest, the most charming angel of them all; and in pure and liquid French, gave a prologue of greeting to His Honor. Happy man! At the last soft syllable of the angel—we mention no names as there may be jealousy even in heaven—the whole concourse chanted together: which enrthralling exercise was followed by a grave and learned treatise on the matter of "books," by a "sweet girl graduate." Musty books, bethought the scribe were the last things to associate with such as her.

On the conclusion of this, there was a fluttering of wings or skirts, and they all with one accord did vanish with appropriate rapidity, with the exception of four cherubs, who sat, with folded hands and demure eyes downcast, on either side of the dais. Then re-enter, at the call of a kindly sister, Miss Blanche Stanford and Mdle. Marie Morrin, on whose heads, for the diligence of their labors and for proficiency were placed, by the hands of His Honor, a crowning myrtle wreath, and into their hands a glowing medal. Then came many more, who were invested with flowing ribbons of azure hue, of scarlet, tender pink, and radiant green, each one with blushing smile and graceful droop of head, receiving the honor laid thus lightly on her young shoulders. And still they came and were gifted with medals of gold, medals of silver and bronze, or diplomas that spoke in unstinted terms to their many virtues and talents. And the little maids that aforesaid sat so still upon the dais, now flitted back and forth with untiring zeal, conveying to the

(Continued on page 3.)