

The Northwest Review

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NOTICE.

The editor will always gladly receive articles on general or local importance, even political if not of a party character. (2) LETTERS on similar subjects, whether conveying or asking information or controversial.

OUR ARCHBISHOP'S LETTER.

St. Boniface, May 10th, 1898.

Mr. E. J. Dermody.

DEAR SIR,—I see by the last issue of the Northwest Review that you have been entrusted by the directors of the journal with the management of the same.

I need not tell you that I take a deep interest in the Northwest Review which is the only English Catholic paper published within the limits of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories.

Yours all devoted in Christ, ALEX. ARCHBISHOP OF ST. BONIFACE, O. M. I.

The Northwest Review

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER, 7.

A HAPPY DEATH.

We recorded in the columns of the last issue of the REVIEW the sad news of the death of two holy nuns at St. Boniface, and not a week has passed ere we are again called upon to announce to our readers another such sorrowful bereavement this time in the person of Rev. Sister Mary Agapit who departed this life on Sunday November 4, at the Academy on Notre Dame Street in this city.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

November is the month of the holy souls in Purgatory, when Catholics are urged to be mercifully mindful of the church suffering. They should not let one day of the thirty pass without its De Profundis.

London is at present in the midst of an agitation similar to that organized by Dr. Parkhurst in New York. The cable dispatches recently contain the following remark with reference to this great capital of a Protestant nation:

"It is universally admitted, that vice flaunts itself more boldly, more offensively in the streets of London than anywhere else on earth."

The proprietor of the REVIEW and those in charge of its editorial department desire to thank Mr. O'Connell Powell for the kind services which he gave them during the illness of Mr. E. J. Dermody, our publisher and proprietor.

The Northwest Review does not as a rule take part in politics. On the contrary, it carefully avoids it. The exception happens when faith, morals or Catholic rights are in jeopardy.

WAS IT "AN UNDESERVED ATTACK?"

The Nor Wester recently said that the Manitoba school act of 1890 was an "outrage committed by men who called themselves Liberals, but who have prostituted the name and rendered it vile in this country by enacting such a monstrosity of monstrosities as the election law."

And to this the Free Press replies:

"It is a fair deduction to make that, if the men who passed the school act of 1890 committed an outrage which, as the Nor Wester says, is a breach of faith which involves the honor of the whole country, those who have by voice or vote approved this action of the provincial legislature are participants in the 'outrage' and have forfeited so much of the honor of the country as is committed to their care."

Is this a just accusation to bring against the majority of men in Manitoba?

The Nor Wester is a successful rival of the Free Press in this province and, of course, for commercial reasons alone, the Free Press would like to appeal to the spirit of fanaticism, of what it is pleased to call, "a large majority of the people."

There can be no doubt whatever that the "large majority" of those who endorsed the government's school policy allowed their bigotry against Catholic institutions to blind them to the despicable and outrageous tactics which the government had adopted in abolishing the Catholic school and passing the school act of 1890.

Many of them, no doubt, were in ignorance of all the low treachery and dishonorable duplicity of the government in bringing it about. They saw such tactics endorsed, applauded and approved by the leaders of Protestant thought in the province and, no doubt, could not reconcile such leaders with anything unjust, dishonorable and treacherous.

Yet, in endorsing the government's school law, these leaders of Protestant religious thought in Manitoba, showed to their followers and to the world that they condoned and actively endorsed the principle that it was right, just, equitable and quite proper, to violate public pledges, involving the truth and honor of the government, provided such pledges were given to their Catholic fellow citizens.

That it was not a breach of public faith and public honor to obtain the support of the Catholics, by promising to conserve their schools, and after obtaining office through these promises, then to turn round and violate them.

As we said before, those who did so, were only following in the wake of their spiritual guides.

The morals of this remind us of an answer given to a question once asked by a small Catholic boy, of his Protestant teacher, in a country school in Ontario, while the teacher was explaining the character of Henry VIII.

"Was it not peculiar that God should select such a wicked brute to establish a new religion?" The teacher replied, after an embarrassing pause, "God often selects the most characterless wretches to do His greatest works."

The reply of the teacher, did not give that boy a very high opinion of the wisdom or goodness of God, and until his mother explained the fallacy, and even blasphemy, of the teacher's reply, he was not able to change his opinion of God, as conveyed in the teacher's answer.

Could it be possible that the Right Rev. and Rev. gentlemen, who endorsed the Greenway government in its school legislation, after a full and complete knowledge of all the treachery, dishonesty and duplicity involved therein, were suffering from the same mental and moral delusion as that teacher, in regard to the instruments God selects for bringing about "reforms"?

Have minorities no right, or may they be subjected to the greatest indignities? And does the endorsement of the majority lessen the injustice of the perpetrators of the outrage or in any way condone their conduct?

MR. MARTIN MISREPRESENTED.

At the recent banquet given to Mr. Lanier, Mr. Joseph Martin is reported as having said:

He (Mr. Martin) was glad that the ablest representative at this particular time happened to be a Frenchman; because it had been represented that he (Mr. Martin) was an enemy to the French people, and he was enabled by the devotion he extended to the leader of the Liberal party to answer fully that charge.

If the world did not know that Mr. Martin was, like Brutus, an honorable man, in fact, if they, his hearers, were not all honorable men, as public honor goes in Manitoba, they must have been somewhat surprised at the sublime audacity of the man.

But as Mr. Martin is an honorable man and like all honorable men, is likewise a truthful and, withal, modest man, we can only conclude that he was suffering from some unaccountable mental aberration when he told the gentlemen present that he was glad that the ablest man in the Liberal party was a Frenchman and that he was not unfriendly to that race.

Mr. Martin very modestly and complainingly stated that he was represented as an enemy of the French people. It is really too bad that so good and so true a friend of the French race should be represented as their enemy!

It makes us feel sad to think that we have been representing Mr. Martin, for the last four or five years, as an enemy of the French race. During all that time Mr. Martin has been a public man, and according to his own statement, an ardent admirer of the French people, and glad that the ablest representative of his political party is a Frenchman.

While we have been among those who have represented him as an enemy of the French people. We are perfectly conscious that we did not so represent him out of malice or any other unworthy motive. We were perfectly honest in holding these views, and yet Mr. Martin says we misrepresented him!

This is a serious charge against our integrity as a journalist and our character, as a Christian. Is it possible that we have been guilty of misrepresenting a public man, like Mr. Martin, through ignorance of his true character and public acts?

If so, all we can do is to withdraw our misrepresentations and apologize to both Mr. Martin and the public for our crime. Public honesty and our common Christianity demand that, at our hands let us examine this claim of Mr. Martin's to be recognized as the friend of the French people. One of the speakers at the banquet laid it down, and we think justly so, that a constituency may be judged by the character of the man it elects to represent it.

With equal force may it be said, that the representative of a people may be fairly judged by his public conduct. If his conduct be honorable, just, fair, equitable, and, above all, in accordance with the pledges he had made, then he has a right to be considered a friend, or, at least, he should not be represented as an enemy.

was nothing the French people valued so much as their language and their schools, and they became alarmed lest those French Canadian electors should believe these alleged charges of enmity, at the hands of the liberals.

Mr. Joseph Martin, who was acknowledged as one of the liberal leaders, indignantly denied that it was the intention of the Liberal party to interfere with any of the rights of the French people. He told them that no one could destroy these rights because they were guaranteed by the constitution and, even if the Liberals were bad enough to do so, they were unable to do it.

"But," said Mr. Martin, "it is no part of the Liberal programme to attempt such a thing and, gentlemen, if you do not believe me, you may ask Mr. Fisher, who is the President of the Liberal party in the province. If you elect us we will, not only not interfere with your rights and privileges to your language and schools, but we will protect you in all of them."

The French people accepted Mr. Martin as his word. They rejected their co-religionist and elected a Protestant Liberal and brought Mr. Martin into power. Shortly afterward there was a general election and Mr. Martin's leader, the premier, renewed these promises to the late Archbishop Tache, and on the strength of these pledges, won all the French constituencies, except two.

Is it necessary for us to tell our readers and the public that Mr. Joseph Martin was a party to the violation of all these promises? Nay more, it was Mr. Joseph Martin who forced these issues and compelled a weak and dishonorable first minister, to reluctantly carry them out.

It was he who first pledged his honor and that of his government to the electors of St. Francois Xavier and told them that the Liberal government would protect them in their schools and in the official use of their language. It was he who forced that Liberal government to violate every one of those pledges.

Here is what Mr. James Fisher, in his masterly speech on the school question, delivered in the Legislature on March 2nd 1893, says about this pledge of Mr. Martin:

"Mr. Martin, in a powerful speech, denounced the statements of Burke and his friends as false. He told the meeting that it had never been the policy of Liberals to interfere with the language or institutions of the French Catholic population, and he appealed to them to trust the Liberals, and to support their candidate. At that time I was President of the Provincial Association of Liberals, and Mr. Martin referred to my presence at the meeting, and said I could put him right if he was wrong.

He went further, and not only said Liberals had no idea of interfering with these institutions, but he gave a positive pledge, in the name of the Liberal party, that they would not do so. I have always thought that the movement to establish the present school law, abolishing all Catholic schools, against the strong protest of the minority was, under the circumstances, and in the face of that promise, a gross wrong. Personally I made no promise, but felt as much bound by the pledge given as if I had given it myself."

These are our reasons for having frequently represented Mr. Joseph Martin as an enemy of the French people. If he is not only an enemy of theirs, but a most dishonorable and unscrupulous one, then we have been most unjust to him.

did during Chapleau's speeches, that he was a seductive siren whose sweet voice was not true, whose very sentences were grammatically unfinished, though the sonorous cadence brought them to an elegant full stop; nor did you ask yourself, as you might after one of Laurier's oracular pronouncements, what in the world he had said besides gilding a platitudo or deftly diverting the expectations of an audience.

Plainness, directness, earnestness were written in every line of Mercier's martial face as he looked straight into the eyes of his hearers. You realized that he might be mistaken but that he meant every word he uttered. And those words were backed by great, strong, clear arguments. His reasonings, like his sentences, were never lame and incomplete.

As a master of the French language, he was far and away above either of his two great rivals. This distinguished trio were born within fourteen months of each other; but Mercier had the advantage of a better college training; he had lived with models of taste and masters of logic and criticism; this intellectual refinement stood him in good stead throughout his whole public career; it taught him to seize the strong point in every important question, and, although it did not save him from strange aberrations due to the vehemence of his feelings, it made him value the paramount claims of God so highly that his greatest public triumph was a religious one and the noblest act of his life was the way he laid it down.

Those who have known him intimately testify to the thoroughness of his Catholic faith. Glaring as were the faults of his conduct at certain periods, they simply point to the vast difference between faith and practice. His faith was strong; his will, so masterful in organizing a political campaign, was weak as water in presence of unscrupulous friends soliciting favors.

At the time when he settled the matter of the Jesuits' estate his influence in the Province of Quebec was immense; he had, as it were, baptized the Liberals into the Catholic Church; he might have passed any wholesome measure he chose; had he remained disinterested and truly Catholic in deed as he then was, he might have become the foremost man in all the Dominion, as he gave promise of being when he gathered about him in Quebec the Liberal leaders of the various provinces.

But, alas! he was led astray by a clique of flatterers, and when the idol of the people proved to be a thing of clay, it was shattered as never political idol was shattered before. Mercier's ruin was as complete as his triumph had been splendid. In the overwhelming vote that swept him from power, the people of Quebec showed with what intelligent swiftness they could use their franchise, and once more relegated the Liberals of that Province to the shades of doubtful orthodoxy.

His last words, as reported in the Montreal papers, bring vividly home to us another characteristic of his which was the outcome of his Catholic spirit and one of his most beautiful traits. In his last conscious moments he said: "Tell my opponents that I have forgotten all." Not only did he forgive right royally; he absolutely forgot the terrible knock-down blows he had received.

A Protestant, who holds one of the highest offices in Canada, told us the other day how he had been impressed with the magnanimity of Mercier. "He was," said our distinguished friend, "the noblest Frenchman I have ever known. Let his worst enemy come to him with expressions of regret; he would take him to his bosom, he would forgive and utterly forget the past, soothing the repentant antagonist by reminding him that we all had our faults and must bear with one another." That supreme test of the true and generous Christian, the forgiveness of enemies, he carried beyond the strict letter of the command even unto blotting out the past as if it had never been.

And so it is supremely fitting that the most famous of his sayings should be: "Let us cease our fratricidal struggles; let us be united" (Cessons nos luttes fratricides, soyons unis). Mercier's chequered career carries with it a twofold lesson: the suicidal danger that lurks in the love of applause, and the Earnest fortitude with which a man of earnest faith can meet the bitter pangs of a premature death.

Had his intense love of country been buttressed by unflinching devotion to duty, had he steeled himself against the allurements of vanity, his success would have been ten times as great as it was and immeasurably more lasting. And yet the brave godliness of his end, which was above all a mercy from heaven towards a man who had at one time fought the battles of the Lord, atones largely for the broken promise of his brilliant life.

A RECORD OF SLANDER.

There is a little newspaper published in Rat Portage, called the Record. It is possessed of one little idea and when it travels beyond that, and ventures to deal with any subject requiring common sense and common decency, it becomes submerged in the waves upon which it foolishly embarked and ends up by falling back upon the aforesaid little idea.

In a recent issue it ventured to rebuke the Nor Wester for being guilty of condemning the language of a Protestant minister. This Protestant minister wished to have an opportunity of indulging in the Christian (?) amusement of choking a priest. The Nor Wester called such conduct "religious fanaticism" and said that such a man should be degraded from his sacred office. The paper with the little idea, replies:

"Well, really! Is the office of a Roman Catholic priest so sacred as that? What has the Nor Wester to say for the Roman Catholics who stoned the Salvation Army, the Baptist Mission and Episcopal worshippers in Quebec? If a man who 'would like to choke a priest' is 'not fit to associate with human beings,' what are those assassins fit for? Have we heard the Nor Wester denounce in thunder tones the government in the French Catholic province that declines to protect the Protestant citizens in the exercise of their rights as British subjects to enjoy freedom of worship?"

The character of a Catholic priest is, in the opinion of this rag, not sufficiently sacred to protect his neck from the tender embraces of a fanatical Protestant minister. The Nor Wester, as well as every other respectable journal in the country, condemned the rioters in Quebec for interfering with the Baptists Mission, etc. The Record is simply indulging in its old habit of misrepresentation and slander when it says that "the government of the French Catholic province declines to protect the Protestant citizens in the exercise of their rights as British subjects to enjoy freedom of worship."

This is a falsehood, pure and simple. So far from this charge being true, the very opposite is the case. In no province of this Dominion, is the minority treated with such kindly consideration as in the French Catholic province of Quebec. Only an ignorant or malicious donkey, without any sense of decency, or any regard for truth, could give currency to such sentiments or utter such a slander.

Because there are ministers in the Protestant church who "would like to choke a priest" and others, who incited the mob in Quebec, by telling them that nuns and priests were immoral, forgetting that many of their listeners had dear sisters and daughters, brothers and sons whom they loved and revered as good and pure, among the nuns and priests, while it may explain and even palliate the riots, it cannot justify mob law. The Record surely does not wish to place a Protestant minister on the same level of responsibility as an excited mob, or seek to excuse him for wishing to choke a priest, because a few boys disturbed a preacher for calling their sisters and brothers by vile and wicked names?

If this be its standard of morality for pugnaciously inclined ministers, we cannot say that they are much slandered by its estimate of them. The Record is very anxious that one law should prevail on this fair Canada of ours, and that law is to be Protestant. It says: "Because our neighbor province (Manitoba) was so progressive as to elevate its educational system from the slough of religious bigotry we have heard loud and long the cry of intolerance and fanaticism." And then it answers this loud and long cry by saying: "It is most surprising that Protestants can be found who will uphold the perpetuation of medievalism in this enlightened age under the cloak of the golden rule."

If all Protestants were created and brought up on the same small and narrow lines as this poor fellow, no doubt they would be unable to see the injustice, even in this enlightened age, of taxing Catholics to support Protestant schools, which they cannot use, and for the education of Protestant children. This fellow would see no wrong if Catholics were taxed to feed his children as well as educate them. It would be in perfect accord with his ideas of the enlightenment of this age to make these "medieval" Catholics build, furnish and equip Methodist churches and even provide for the salary of the preachers. They might as well ask us to pay for the propagation of Protestant principles in churches as to ask us to pay for a similar diffusion of Protestant principles and teachings in the schools. To us "medieval" Catholics, there is no difference. We have been contributing our taxes for the past four years to these schools and, as far as we are concerned, we would just as soon that the money had been given to the aforesaid churches as to the schools. Neither the one nor the other could be used by us. And yet this little mental deformity says:

"It is most surprising that Protestants can be found who will uphold the perpetuation of medievalism in this enlightened age under cloak of the golden rule. One law for all and that the most advanced and equitable, should prevail in this fair Canada of ours." If the Record knew anything about

We should consider that day happy in which we have either prevented an evil or done a good.—St. Vincent de Paul. It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead.