

HIS GRACE'S ANNIVERSARY
Continued from page 1.

and the audience overflowed into the roomy vestibule. Besides His Grace, the guest of the evening, some fifty clergymen were present with some four hundred other invited guests. The overture, Marche de Boccace (Suppe), was admirably rendered by the college orchestra. A French address by J. Mondor and an English address by J. O. Plante, both very well drafted and read, voiced the devotion of the students to their dear Archbishop and the pride they felt in his noble labors. "En pleine paroisse Manitobaine, scene de vie canadienne"—a charmingly natural dialogue between four of the older students, A. Toutant, A. Bernier, C. E. Dufresne and N. Laplume, represented the superior advantages of life in the country, and ended by convincing the city man, Laplume, that he had better settle on a farm in a French Canadian parish. The familiar colloquialisms of this clever dialogue were heartily applauded. Under the leadership of Father George Robichaud, the college choir sang, with startling precision, Gagnon's melody of French Canadian popular airs, entitled, "Soirees de Quebec." Then Harold Conway showed his delicate appreciation of tone, phrasing and general delivery as he recited "His Endless Heritage," a poem written for the occasion and which will be reproduced next week. N. Bellavance, a fourth year university man, followed with a well written and well spoken speech on "L'Action des Jeunes," showing how young men were the hope of the future, especially in matters Catholic. "La Jeunesse Chretienne," a metrical dialogue of rare power and point, also written for the occasion, was feelingly rendered by J. Trudel, J. de Beudrap and A. Auger. "J'y suis, j'y reste" gave J. Prendergast an opportunity of manifesting his intention of not outgrowing his important function of ceremonial assistant to the Archbishop. The orchestra came next with "La Czarine," a finished blending of harmony and melody. A. Beaupre recited, in excellent voice and manner, Count Albert de Mun's plea for popular religion, as against the enemies of all religion, "Le Christianisme et le Peuple." This was followed by a metrical dialogue in English, "A Prairie Pastoral," in which the manly bass of A. Baribeau, garbed as an aged shepherd, countered with the clear trebles of the youthful shepherds, J. McManus and E. Becher, who always brought the subject round to His Grace, the spiritual shepherd. A finely executed four-instrument piece, "La Cinquantaine (Gabriel Marie)" revealed unusual skill in the young musicians. Then came ten-year-old A. Prud'homme, affirming that he was now a man and would stand no bullying nor corporal punishment. The piece which was thoroughly local, was entitled "Un grand homme." Perhaps the most popular item on the beautifully printed programme, was the last, "Depuis l'an dernier," a spirited juvenile dialogue between A. Lambert, J. Bertrand, J. Beliveau, V. Guibault and A. Bertrand. It was full of local hits and delighted especially the clerical part of the audience. Thus, apart from the composing of the music and the selection from Count de Mun, the entire entertainment fully deserved the general title, "Actualities" (Passing events), since it was all original and up-to-date.

(To be Continued.)

POPULAR OPINION ON THE SCHOOL QUESTION.

To the Editor of the Free Press.
Sir,—It is very interesting to one who has taken some interest in political affairs and who has read the history of Canada with the assistance of some light drawn from contemporary experience in many parts of Canada, to note the tactics adopted at the present day to weaken and embarrass the Liberal government. We have been repeatedly told within a few days that Laurier was carried to power in 1896 by his manly stand in favor of provincial rights on the school question, and, we are told, with a sob in the voice, that alas! wisdom has departed from the Liberal leader and that unfortunately he has again fallen a slave to the clerical power which, it is insinuated, no Catholic can long hope to escape. There may be some who speak thus who are sincere, but I do not fear to assert that the major-

ity of those who are trying to stir up another school agitation are rank demagogues who never had any acquaintance with that priceless virtue, sincerity. If we are to examine their records we should find that nine-tenths of those who now praise Laurier's attitude in 1896, at that time fought him bitterly in favor of a government pledged to coercion, and that they were also among those who worked so earnestly in succeeding campaigns to arouse racial prejudices in these parts against the French premier for his alleged disloyalty. They belong to that class of get-to-power-quick politicians who are led by a warped judgment to state their future on sectarian agitations, just as the flim-flam gamblers believe that they have found the royal road to fortune. They believe that they have now an opportunity to create a stampede in the Liberal party over the Northwest schools and they are again posing as the defenders of the nation. A short course in reading would no doubt enlighten them on the traditional trend of public opinion on this question of separate schools.

If we go back to ante-confederation days, we find that Ontario was then afflicted as to-day with a noisy crowd of agitators who maintained that Protestant supremacy and British civil liberty were endangered by the existence of separate schools; but this crowd never could attain power. In the eighties, Mr. Meredith, a man of superior attainments, was induced to undertake a persistent campaign against alleged abuses of the separate school laws, and he just so long failed to lead the Conservative party to power, while Mr. Whitney has attained success by letting those issues severely alone and letting the constitution take its course.

How was it with Laurier in 1896? If the school question had been the important question short-sighted politicians imagine it to be, the very thing to conjure with, Laurier should have carried a large majority of the seats in all the Protestant provinces and have been defeated in Quebec. The reverse was the case. Manitoba even, for whose protection the battle had been fought, gave a majority to the coercionists and partisans of separate schools by force. The Conservatives were defeated in 1896, not on account of the schools, but of their own powerlessness. At the subsequent elections of 1900 Laurier again lost ground in Ontario. Some might say that it was because his settlement of the school question had been approved by Dalton McCarthy. History will say, with more truth, that the Liberal defeat in Ontario in 1900 was due to the loss of the Patrons, who had been disappointed by the tariff legislation of the government.

History teaches that in Canada appeals for the persecution and coercion of minorities have always been of very secondary importance in politics, rather a burden than an advantage to the party which has been led to make them. The R. P. A. agitation went down in shame and failure, and the men associated with it can never hope to attain the highest positions in the land until they have lived down their record of intolerance.

(To be continued.)

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