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Glimpses of the Political Field

Premier Roblin's speech at Baldoon, in which so much public interest was manifested, did not come up to expectations. He dealt only with the boundary question and did not comment to any extent on the incidents which, for a time, made Manitoba the storm centre of the school question. The only announcements of importance made by Mr. Roblin were to the effect that he had had no negotiations with Archbishop Langevin, looking to further concessions to the minority, and that he would not consult Ontario in the matter of the extension of Manitoba's boundaries. Mr. Roblin seems to have decided to leave to his two colleagues—Messrs. Campbell and Rogers—the task of carrying on the campaign against clerical interference. His chief concern is boundary extension, and in that question he is very emphatic. Ordinarily, his suggestion that Ontario had no right to be heard in the matter would cause a storm of indignation in this province. As it is, his words have been received with indifference. The people of Ontario are too keenly interested in the question of coercion to bother themselves about the lesser question of boundary extension, which Manitoba has introduced as a side issue to the school question. After all, it is a tribute to the sentiment in this province that the liberties of a sister community are dearer to it than the wide acres of territory which come within the question of boundary extension.

The announcement that no communications had been carried on between the Manitoba government and Archbishop Langevin is not of great importance. The charge, if such it may be called, never had the slightest relation to the issue that is being fought out at Ottawa, nor to the right of Mr. Sbarretti to interfere in the political affairs of this country. Mr. Roblin's statement, however, will confine the question of clerical interference to its legitimate limits, and will rob the apologists for Mr. Sbarretti's conduct of their favorite argument. Very little could be said against the Manitoba government if it had confessed to the charge of negotiating with Archbishop Langevin for an improvement of the separate school system. Within the last ten days, we have found how important church influence is at Ottawa, and to what extremes it is exerted in opposition to public men who stand for the people's rights as against sectarian privileges. It is now clear that operations against the Manitoba government, under the auspices of the church, have been carried on from Ottawa. Rather than withstand these operations, supported, as they are, with the power of the Laurier government, Premier Roblin might well have listened, or pretended to listen, to representations, looking to the extension of the separate school privileges in Manitoba.

The Manitoba government has clearly made up its mind to do something of a sensational character. It would not have dissolved the legislature and appealed to the country if Lieut.-Governor McMillan had permitted it to do so. His honor seemed to think that such a move would provide too much embarrassment for the government at Ottawa, but he cannot very well stand in the way of Premier Roblin's modified plans of summoning the legislature. If the legislature meets within the next few weeks, the session will be a memorable one. It will not only take action in the support of its claims to boundary extension, but in all probability it will repeal the act which embodies the agreement made between Laurier government and the late Greenway government in regard to separate schools. It looks very much as if the Manitoba legislature is to repeat its famous stroke of 1890 and wipe out separate schools. Such an action will transfer to the Dominion government the issue which sent the Tupper government on the rocks. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has at no time justified the Manitoba school act of 1890 by which the schools were abolished in the Province of Manitoba. He has always assured the church and his co-religionists that he would do his utmost to restore to the Manitoba minority what he believed to be its rights. He is likely to be soon confronted with the task of making good this promise by the very means which were followed by the late Conservative government.

The Conservative government in Manitoba appears to have decided to create for the Laurier government the fatal difficulties which a Liberal government in Manitoba made ten years ago for the Tupper government.

The Montreal Star and The Montreal Gazette are taking a leading part in furthering the efforts of the powers behind the autonomy bill. These two newspapers, without taking up a very definite position as to the merits of the government's policy, have suddenly decided that no matter how iniquitous the legislation may be only a limited amount of opposition should be offered to it. They profess to be afraid that if the fight continues the country will again have the old school question upon it. It is news to Ontario to learn that the issue at Ottawa has never been anything else but a school question. It is exactly like every other school question that has arisen in this country. A strong and aggressive church makes use of politicians to obtain educational privileges by the coercion of a province. A struggle ensues and then the public men and newspapers who resist the movement are branded as fomenters of discord and incendiaries. It is impossible to discuss the educational clauses of the autonomy bill without treating them in their relation to that very school question of which we are commanded to speak with bated breath. Canada to-day is in the throes of a school question. No one can deny that, but who is to blame for it? Those who forced the legislation on the Laurier government in defiance of the rights of the western provinces, or those who are resisting it in the name of provincial rights and religious equality?

Hon. Sydney Fisher's speech on the autonomy bill was a succession of tributes to the tolerance of Quebec in educational affairs. The argument is a very old one and is not only irrelevant in the present controversy but deceptive in its representation of conditions in Quebec. The Protestant minority in Quebec may establish separate schools, and for these institutions it receives a niggardly public support. But what is the option which Quebec offers its Protestant minority? Quebec does not provide schools where children of all creeds may receive secular education without offence to their religious scruples. The public schools of Quebec are sectarian schools. They are a department of the church rather than a department of public instruction. Even a fire-eater bigot like Henri Bourassa admits that it would be impossible for Protestant children to attend what are called public schools in Quebec. And yet the Protestant minority of Quebec was freed from the necessity of using these sectarian schools only by an arrangement whereby Ontario paid ten times over for such freedom. Ontario bought for the Protestants of Quebec the right to educate their children outside of schools in which the emblems of Catholicism and the teaching of Catholicism were thrust into every hour of the school day. It is this "concession" that is put forward as proof of Quebec's tolerance.

Some newspapers are still pressing the argument that hostility to separate schools is the essence of the objection to the coercion of the north-west—the fuel upon which the fire of controversy feeds. It may be freely admitted that the great majority of the enemies of coercion are not friendly to separate schools. Among them are many men who would not show as much feeling in an ordinary case of violation of provincial rights, but does this fact affect the merits of the legislation before the house, or does it supply one reason why coercion should not be fought to the last ditch? It is sufficient to know that the Canadian public understands the issue to be essentially one of provincial rights. Let the new provinces plant separate schools at every corner if they desire to do so, but let the Dominion parliament refrain from compelling those provinces to submit to the establishment of one separate school which they do not want. The most violent enemy of separate schools does not dispute the right of a province to establish and maintain them. He does dispute the right of the Dominion parliament to say to this province or that province: "You shall support separate schools whether you want to do it or not. It

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COSSACKS AT ST. PETERSBURG LEST DISORDERS BE REMUED

Big Pullout Works Close Owing to Unreasonable Demands and Trouble Seems Brewing.

St. Petersburg, April 15.—Several squadrons of Don Cossacks have been brought in to reinforce the garrison here in consequence of fears of a renewal of disorders. The peasant movement in the neighborhood of Moscow is also inspiring serious apprehensions. Many properties along the Moscow-Kazan Railroad are guarded by troops, and the families of the landowners are seeking refuge in Moscow.

SENTENCED TO DEATH.

Warsaw, April 15.—Three workmen, accused of wounding a policeman during the January riots, were to-day sentenced to death after a trial by court-martial.

SHOT A POLICEMAN.

Lodz, April 15.—Two workmen to-day shot and killed a policeman in the street. One of the assassins was arrested.

JEOPARDIZE PEACE CONFERENCE.

Washington, April 15.—Enquiry into the status of the negotiations instituted by President Roosevelt looking to a second peace conference, suggested by Lord Lansdowne's reference to the subject in the British parliament, develops the fact that the state department here has completed its functions so far as this matter is concerned, at least for the present, having remitted it to the executive council of the Hague tribunal.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS.

Household pets are susceptible to a far greater variety of diseases than most people imagine. Parrots are known to be susceptible to a disease peculiar to the parrot species that is called from the Greek word for parrot "psittacosis." A number of fatal cases in human beings of what was at first supposed to be malignant influenza pneumonia were in Paris traced to the birds at present thought to be the causative agent of the parrot disease. A certain proportion of parrots are known to die from tuberculosis. Cats are known sometimes to have tuberculosis, and that they have in many cases been carriers of diphtheria and other of the ordinary infections directly and indirectly is more than suspected.

is one thing to look with calmness on separate schools voluntarily established and supported by a province, and it is another thing to calmly observe the Dominion parliament entering into partnership with the Quebec hierarchy to encourage, regardless of the rights of provinces, the growth of separate schools in Canada.

It is comforting to note that, in this province of bigots and incendiaries, there is one individual which Quebec is willing to make an honorary member of the most distinguished order of broad-minded patriots. R. A. Pringle, M. P. for Cornwall, made a speech on the autonomy bill the other day. He indicated that it would be his solemn duty to support the bill, and forthwith the Quebec press began to sing his praises. Mr. Tarte suddenly discovered that the member for Cornwall was a distinguished authority, that he was a marvel of tolerance and mental balance. Mr. Pringle may deserve all these kind words, but it is extraordinary that Mr. Tarte, who is reputed to be a very keen observer, failed to discern the brilliant qualities of the member for Cornwall long before the autonomy bill punctured the peace and harmony of Canada. It would, of course, be unfair to mention the fact that a considerable number of the 41 per cent, of which so much is heard, have the honor of being represented by Mr. Pringle. Mr. Pringle's decision to support the bill was formed in contemptuous disregard of political expediency. His secession from his party in such a crisis, while not altogether admirable, has the one good effect of mitigating Ontario's reputation as a bigot among the people of Quebec.

Harmless Mosquitoes.

Rio Janeiro: Senhor Lacerda, the director of the biological department of the National Museum, has patented a combination of vegetable substances which, when rubbed on any part of the body, absolutely prevents bites by mosquitoes and other insects. Many experiments have been made with the liquid in the museum, including the exposure of a nude man, treated with it, to 100 different poisonous insects. None of the insects attempted to approach the man.

In the removal of R. J. Mahony to New York City, Toronto has lost one of its best-known fire underwriters. Mr. Mahony was formerly assistant secretary of the Western Assurance Company, and will now take the position of assistant manager to W. L. Perrin, one of the largest insurance brokers in New York. He was presented with a gold watch by the officers and staff of the company, with which he has been connected for the last twenty years, the presentation being made by J. J. Kenny.

tion to formally undo the wrong that was done him, but public sympathy would go with him a great deal further. It would go with him to the point of placing on the records of the house a motion censuring the royal commission. There is much in the political history of this province to bring the blush of shame to the Ontario citizen, but nothing more flagrant than the report of the royal commission on the Gamey charges. The fact that the evidence was not sufficient to prove the charge gave the commission no excuse for ignoring the mass of testimony which gave strong color to those charges. The judges deliberately cast aside the evidence that implicated the defence and devoted themselves almost wholly to the task of blackening the accused. Ontario will not soon forget the conduct of the royal commission, but its memory should be reinforced with a formal reminder, suitably inscribed on the journals of the Ontario legislature.

Thoughtful Paul.

From The Detroit Tribune.
Paul Revere had just made his thrilling ride.
"But if you had gone in an automobile you could have made better time than on the horse," suggested a friend.
"Not at all," replied the hero. "I would have been stopped every few minutes while rural constables took my number."

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MICHIGAN BANK CLOSES AFTER MORNING BUSINESS

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Owosso, Mich., April 15.—The private bank of M. L. Stewart & Co. of this city, one of the largest private banking institutions in the state, closed its doors at noon to-day, and posted a notice saying that the bank's affairs were in the hands of the Detroit Trust Company. The deposits have been estimated to be well over a half million dollars. The bank accepted deposits during the morning, and the closing of the institution caused a sensation.

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