

The Catholic Record.

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London, Saturday, May 9, 1896.

THE SCHOOLS OF ONTARIO.

Owing to the pressure of other important matters on our space, we have been obliged to delay till now some remarks we desired to make on the Ontario School report issued for the year 1895 by the Minister of Education, and which has been before us for some time.

The report gives the school statistics for 1894, and it indicates satisfactory progress on the part of the children, and in the status of the schools in every respect.

It is worthy of remark that though there is a reported increase of 1337 in the school population of the Province, the increase in the number of school sections and Public school houses has been only six during the year, whereas during the previous year, with a reported decrease of 2,795 in the school population, the increase in the number of Public school houses was 64. This may be accounted for partly by the fact that the number of new Catholic schools established during 1895 was unusually large, 15 having been started, whereas there was only one new Separate school established in 1893. The total number of Separate schools is now 323.

The number of Protestant Separate schools remains the same as in the preceding year, being 10.

The total attendance of pupils at the Public schools for the year was 593,840, being an increase of 440 over 1893, but the average attendance was much improved, the percentage of average attendance being 56 per cent., whereas it was previously only 51 per cent. It gratifies us to notice that the average attendance at the Catholic Separate schools was also improved, standing much higher than that of the Public schools, 59 per cent. being recorded for 1894 as against 58 per cent. during the previous year. There was also a very satisfactory increase in the attendance of pupils at the Separate schools, the increase being 1,695.

A good average attendance is one of the evidences of efficiency in teaching and school management, and it is highly gratifying to observe that in this respect the Separate schools of the Province have a good record in comparison with the Public schools, the average is 3 per cent. higher than that of the Public schools, yet we must say that we are not satisfied that the record is not still better. It is not enough that the average pupil should attend school only fifty-nine days out of one hundred, and this is what an average attendance of 59 per cent. signifies.

Some pupils attend school very regularly, but these are very few. Out of a total of 39,762 in the Separate schools, only 1,722 attended over 200 days, whereas 15,549 attended not more than 100 days, and, of these, 6,924 attended fifty days or less. There is evidently great negligence on the part of parents, and much inappreciation of the necessity of securing a good education for their children. While it is quite true, therefore, that the attendance at the Catholic Separate schools is considerably better than that of the Public schools, it is also true that there is gross negligence on the part of many Catholic parents in not sending their children to school regularly.

In regard to this point, we have looked at the details of the localities which have the best and the worst record.

To secure a good attendance, much depends upon the efficiency and good management of the schools, and much on the personal influence of the trustees, and, especially, of the pastor of the parish on his flock. When all this is as it should be, the attendance of the children at school is likely to be good. Yet we know that there are circumstances in which even the greatest zeal on the part of the pastor and energy on the part of the trustees will not present the results which are so much to be desired. The Separate school population may be spread over too large a space to secure good attendance, or there may be other difficulties

in the way. Nevertheless, we deem it right to give credit where credit is due, and to mention with praise those localities which deserve to be so specified.

The highest average attendance was in Dundas, where it reached 89 per cent. The other localities where the average exceeds 75 per cent, are St. Thomas 83, London 80, Peterborough and Perth 78, Brockville 77, Goderich and Orillia 76. Parents in localities where the average falls so low as 50 or less may learn from these figures what might be effected by making some acts of self-sacrifice for the sake of their children, who are too frequently kept at home on the flimsiest pretexts. There are even certain localities in which the attendance is exceedingly small. The localities which have the distinction of the smallest average percentage are Sarnia, Sault Ste. Marie, and the counties of Grey and Lennox and Addington, in each of which the percentage stands at 42, and as there are ten schools in the counties named, some of these must fall considerably below the low average mentioned.

The report does not give us any data whereby we can compare with absolute accuracy the relative efficiency of the Public and Separate schools, but the number of children reported as studying the three branches of book-keeping, algebra and geometry will give us an approximation on this point. We find by adding these numbers together, the percentage in the Public schools to be 10.9, and in the Catholic schools 10.8, showing that as nearly as can be ascertained the standing of the children is about equal.

At the Protestant Separate schools the average attendance is much below that of either the Public or the Catholic Separate schools, as it reaches only 37.7 per cent. of the total attendance, and in other respects they do not appear to be in a high state of efficiency as a rule. This may be inferred from the fact that of thirteen teachers, only two have second class certificates, six have third class, and five temporary certificates or permits. These facts refute the assertions which are so frequently made by the enemies of Catholic education, that Catholics are so much influenced by an intolerant spirit that they are ready to establish inferior schools, separating themselves from their Protestant neighbors for insufficient causes. The law makes it possible for a Protestant minority in any school section to establish a Protestant Separate school wherever the Public school teacher is a Catholic, and it appears that even when Protestants are not in a position to establish an efficient school they are quite ready to take advantage of the Separate school laws, though they may not have any other reason for so doing than because the teacher of their section is a Catholic.

THE REMEDIAL BILL.

We have received the following letter from an esteemed correspondent in reference to the position taken by the CATHOLIC RECORD on the question of the Remedial Bill:

Toronto, 27th April, 1896.

Dear Sir—In your editorial re "Remedial Bill" of 25th inst. I was not a little surprised to find that you attributed the failure of its passage to the Government, in the following words: "We have not been over-enthusiastic in admiration of the Dominion Government because we could not entirely exonerate them from being somewhat responsible for the delays which have resulted in the laying over of the Remedial Bill till another session. I ask, in all fairness, could the Government have taken stronger grounds to prove to the whole Dominion that they sincerely desired to have this measure successfully carried and settled? After the reception of the Privy Council's decision, did not the Government, on several occasions, endeavor to have the matter settled by having it entirely in the hands of the Manitoba Government? and did not after having finally sent to Manitoba at the last moment Sir Donald Smith and two other gentlemen to urge on Hon. Mr. Greenway the desirability of having some concessions made by his Government, but without avail—that the Dominion Government took the matter up and did all in their power to pass the bill, feeling that they were simply carrying out a clause of the constitution in reference to minorities."

I ask who is to blame for its defeat? Certainly not D'Alton McCarthy and his handful of followers, but to the eternal shame of the leader of the Opposition, who, by the raising of a finger, could have had the bill passed in one sitting. That the whole blame rests on his shoulders must be evident to any one of common sense, and apparent at a glance. What a contrast to find an ex-Grand Master of the Orange Lodge of the Dominion fighting for Catholic rights, and the would-be mouth-piece of the Catholics opposing him by every means in his power! And why? The cause is not hard to find, viz., to defeat the Government, by coquetting with the Orange element in Ontario, and endeavoring to pull the wool over the eyes of the French Canadian brethren in Quebec; but this contemptible trick will fail. All honor to Sir McKenzie Bowell, Sir Charles Tupper and the Government, for their noble stand, and who were prepared to rise or fall in endeavoring to carry out a solemn compact entered into by Manitoba, on its entry into the confederacy, and which was blocked by the "Catholic" leader of the Opposition. In conclusion, I sincerely state that if the case were reversed, and that the Catholics of Manitoba were endeavoring to wrest from their Protestant fellow-citizens a right secured by a solemn compact, I would be the first to raise my voice against such a manifest injustice. I beg to subscribe myself, in the true sense of the word, An Equal Righter.

Our correspondent has mistaken

somewhat the meaning of our remarks. We did not attribute the present failure of the Bill to the Government solely, nor as a whole, for we pointed out that in the late stages especially the members of the Government showed an earnestness for the passage of the Bill for which we gave them due credit. But we cannot close our eyes to the fact that if this earnestness had been exhibited in the beginning of the session, which was ostensibly called for the purpose of introducing remedial legislation, that legislation could not have been successfully obstructed. Besides, we all know that the Government crisis which occurred at the beginning of the session between the reading of the Governor-General's speech from the throne, and the passing of the address in reply, was caused by internal dissensions in the Government. We cannot doubt that the resignation of seven members of the Cabinet was made with full knowledge that the Bill would thereby be endangered, and there is good reason to believe that the delay, and possibly the burking of the Bill, was the chief object of the seceders, or the majority of them.

We are not tied by any partisanship, and so we are able to state our views plainly when the interests of the Catholic Church and people are concerned. We think that the facts as we have stated them justify us in not completely exonerating the Government from being partly the cause of the delay; and, in our desire to see justice done to our co-religionists in Manitoba, we do not hesitate to put the matter honestly before our readers, so that they also may be able to form an intelligent judgment on the case. At the same time, we give due credit to those members of the Government who have consistently insisted on remedying the grievances under which the Catholics of Manitoba are laboring.

We have stated on more than one occasion that it is the duty of the Dominion Government to have justice done in accordance with the Canadian constitution, and it is our firm conviction that justice will be obtained, even though difficulties be thrown in the way by politicians whose principal object is the attainment or retention of office. We do not believe that either political party could afford to ignore the rights of Catholics on this question, and if Catholics are true to themselves throughout the Dominion they will make justice a certainty.

The CATHOLIC RECORD has given no uncertain sound on the question of remedial legislation. We have stated several times our preference that Manitoba itself should settle the difficulty it has created by the abolition of Separate schools. But we have stated unequivocally that in the event of Manitoba's refusal to act, it is the duty of the Dominion Government and Parliament to give the remedy. As Mr. Greenway's Government has refused all efforts at conciliation, we do not believe that Catholics need look to them any further, but must look where the constitution of Canada directs them, that is, to Parliament, and we expect that at the next session the Remedial Bill will be again introduced and passed triumphantly.

We hope that after the electorate of the Dominion shall have selected their representatives, there will be a House of Commons which will set justice above party, and that it will no longer make the rights of Catholics the pawns of the chess board to be moved about to suit the political exigencies of the moment, as has been the case hitherto. In reference to "Equal Righter's" charge that Mr. Laurier is alone responsible for obstructing the Remedial Bill, inasmuch as he did not restrain those Liberals who aided in obstruction, we must point out that there were also Conservatives who do not profess to be McCarthyites, yet who joined in the work of obstruction. It is difficult to say how far the authority of the leaders of the two parties would have restrained their followers, if it had been firmly exerted, but in fairness to all concerned, it is to be said that, outside of the followers of Mr. McCarthy, there were members of both parties who joined in the disreputable work of obstructing public business to defeat a measure of justice to the Manitoba Catholic minority.

Beautiful May! again we welcome thee with thy budding blossoms, flowery garlands, perfume-laden air, and the carrol of thy feathered warblers; but more welcome far are the devotions which the Church sets apart in honor of her to whom the religious exercises of this month are especially dedicated—the Virgin Mother of God.

The most expensive vice is the one that offers to pay its board in advance if you will only give it house room.

NO REUNION.

The special effort which has been in progress during the last two or three years, to bring about a reunion between the three principal Presbyterian Churches in Scotland, has ended in failure, though a number of prominent ministers and laymen who had undertaken the task of reaching a satisfactory result have held many meetings for the purpose during the interim. These three Churches are known, respectively, as the Established, the Free and the United.

The delegates have issued a declaration in the form of several resolutions in which it is stated that in regard to important principles there is a large amount of agreement between the three churches, and that the discussions which have taken place were characterized by a brotherly spirit. The resolutions, however, express the "deep regret" of the convention "at finding itself unable to agree upon a basis for an incorporating union between the three churches."

These Churches have all admitted down to the present time the same general standards of belief, the Westminster Confession of Faith and the larger and shorter Catechisms of the Presbyterians of Great Britain, and an outsider would suppose there would be no great obstacle to a reunion between them. Indeed one of the three, the United Presbyterian, seems to have been originally organized as a means of union between the other two; but its purpose was not attained, as, instead of effecting a union, it has only succeeded in making the breach wider, since it has made a third division of the Presbyterian body, instead of bringing about a union of those already in existence. In this respect the natural tendency of Protestantism to divide itself was exemplified, for though it is now pretty generally admitted even by the sects, that Christ intended there should be one Church, the first principle of Protestantism in all its forms, which is the right of each individual to settle for himself all doctrinal controversies, naturally results in division and subdivision. Such a principle is totally subversive of Christian unity, and so it is not to be wondered at that any movement towards unity should be a failure where such a principle is admitted.

The chief difficulty which keeps the Presbyterian bodies asunder is the question of the authority of the State over the Church. One of the Free Church representatives declared that the Established Church is so completely under control of the State that it cannot refuse obedience to parliamentary enactments even in purely spiritual matters.

This has not been directly denied by the Established Church delegates, but they state euphemistically that the civil power has not interfered with the spiritual independence of the Church. Thus, while the inherent supreme authority of the State is tacitly admitted by them, the representatives of this Church endeavor to soothe themselves and the delegates of the other churches with the hope that the State will not exercise its powers any more in the future than it has done in the past.

The Free Churchmen maintain that it is not a part of the State's duty to decide between the doctrines of different denominations and to place one above the other on the plea that the majority should be favored by State support. They regard this as an act of intolerance which ought to cease.

The Established Church delegates, on the other hand, maintained that the State should be Christian, because Christ is the Head of the State as well as of the Church, and that, therefore, the recognition of the Church by the State is desirable. However, the Established Church delegates inform the other delegates that they have no desire to enforce upon the latter any doctrinal belief in the right of the State to interfere with the spiritualities of the Church. They proposed, therefore, as a compromise, that as a complete union is impossible between the various bodies, there might be a federal union whereby all contention concerning the rights of the Church might be avoided by passing the question over in silence, the more especially as belief in the principle of Establishment is not made a condition of membership or of communion in any of the Churches.

The other two Churches would not consent to a union on such a basis, as they regard the matter of the independence of the Church in the spiritual order as an essential doctrine of Christianity, and so the negotiations have failed. It is possible, however, that the United and Free Kirks may come to some kind of an understanding

which may finally result in union, as they are not hampered by any affection for the Government loaves and fishes, which fall to the share of the Establishment.

The Free Church movement which resulted in schism took place more than half a century ago, and it extended to Canada, causing a schism here as well as in Scotland, for at that time during the regime of the old compact, there was some hope that Presbyterianism might be able to secure, along with the Church of England, the status of an Established Church in Canada. But as in the course of time all hopes of this disappeared, and voluntarism in religion prevailed in this country, the way was opened for a reunion between the two Presbyterian churches, and this reunion was afterwards effected.

A PECULIAR CONVERSION.

The conversion of H. H. Holmes, the wholesale murderer, to the Catholic Church, in his prison at Philadelphia, has been made an occasion for abuse and misrepresentation of the Church by several A. P. A. papers of the United States. The Boston A. P. A. organs have been particularly venomous in this respect, representing that the fact is an evidence that it is according to the fitness of things that murderers should be or should become Catholics, as the Catholic religion is the source and home of all crime. These are falsehoods which are not deserving of serious refutation, as the purity of Catholic morality is well known; but even though the crimes of the condemned man have been so great, there is room for his repentance even when the sentence of death is hanging over him, for God has promised to turn to those who turn to Him, however enormous their crimes may have been.

The Church does not guarantee the sincerity of criminals who profess to be converted, but when they give probable signs of sorrow for their sins she receives them mercifully, and does all in her power to prepare them for a happy death by placing before them for their consideration the most effectual motives of contrition, and endeavors to bring them back again to God. This is what has been done in the case of Holmes, but certainly the Church is in no way responsible for his past misdeeds. Besides, it is to be remembered that Holmes was not reared as a Catholic, and never belonged to the Catholic Church, but it is to be hoped that he was sincere in asking to be received into the Church when sure death was impending over him.

It appears that Holmes has always been a member of the Congregational Church, and he states that he was baptized in childhood as a member of that Church. There appears, however, to have been some doubt of his ever having been baptized till he became a Catholic. This does not militate against the fact, for it is well known that very many Congregationalists live and die without baptism, as in that sect little importance is attached to baptism, and there are many other Protestant sects in which the same carelessness exists in regard to baptism, so that outside of the Anglican or Episcopalian denomination, it is pretty safe to say that scarcely 50 per cent. of Protestants are baptized at all.

A KNOCK-DOWN BLOW.

Illinois is a particularly Republican State, and is generally regarded as giving the keynote to the Republicanism of the whole United States. It is, therefore, interesting to know that the Republican party of that State have utterly repudiated Apaisim by refusing to be guided by the Apaisists in the choice of party candidates for the highest offices in the United States at the coming St. Louis convention. Judge Stevens, secretary of the Executive Council of the A. P. A., announced only a few days ago that the organization controls 5,000,000 votes, and that the Republican party must yield it in the nomination for the presidency, Governor McKinley being declared to be a candidate whom the A. P. A. has determined to ostracise, and, therefore, the organization insists upon the selection of Congressman Linton, of Saginaw, or at least Governor Bradley, of Kentucky, as its second choice for the Republican nomination.

The Illinois State Republican preliminary Convention for the selection of delegates to the general convention to be held at St. Louis met on Tuesday of last week at Springfield, and, despite the opposition of the A. P. A., which claims to dominate the State, the Ohio Governor has been nominated over all

comers as the choice of Illinois by an unexpectedly large majority—a majority of 329 out of 1335 delegates.

It is not merely the State of Illinois which has thus repudiated Apaisim, but the Republican party in the State which the A. P. A. professes to control; and it must be remembered that Governor McKinley had other opponents beside those who opposed him on A. P. A. grounds. Not only was the influence of the A. P. A. unable to turn the balance against him, but it seems to have turned the tide altogether in favor of the man whom they tabooed, and the Republican party now snaps its fingers at the boasted 5,000,000 votes, which they know to exist only in the brains of Traynor, Stevens & Co., who control the A. P. A. But the American people will not submit to be controlled by such a faction. We may consider that the Illinois convention has sounded the death knell to the A. P. A. nominations for the Presidency, that association having only made itself ridiculous by its boasts of what it would do during the coming campaign. We have not the smallest doubt that as a presidential campaign killed Know-Nothingism forty years ago, so the coming presidential campaign will kill Apaisim or revived Know-Nothingism in 1896.

What makes the Illinois vote more remarkable is the fact that it was not a planned or organized result due to log rolling among the politicians, but a spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm on the part of the delegates.

Usually there is much diplomacy exercised in winning over a convention to a particular candidate, but on this occasion nothing of the kind was attempted, simply an over zealous delegate proposed McKinley as the choice of the convention, after the proposition of another candidate, Senator Cullom, who was also opposed by the A. P. A.; but there was no waiting for the exercise of diplomacy, as Governor McKinley's name was at once received with such an outburst of applause that the matter of choosing him was not in doubt for a moment.

There was another knock-down for the A. P. A. when the name of an auditor of their choice was proposed, with the endorsement of the machine managers of the party who had guaranteed their support for him, but he was also defeated by a one-armed veteran whose name was suddenly proposed, and who was at once selected by a fair majority.

The Apaisists have the graciousness to acknowledge that they have received a most unexpected check in the result of the Illinois convention, and it is generally considered that it is indicative of an A. P. A. defeat all along the lines.

A HISTORY OF THE SORBONNE AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS FROM 1252 TO 1896.

The above work, which is shortly to be published by subscription (price, fifteen shillings), from the pen of Mr. John A. Randolph, is the first work in the English language, in book form, on the celebrated college, and is a fitting and timely tribute to its memory, the last vestiges of the old College building giving place now to a sumptuous and palatial edifice costing near £1,000,000, for England was one of the four countries first represented in the Sorbonne at its founding. The author has left no stone unturned to make his work worthy of his subject, and as accurate as possible, a strong feature being the Documentary Evidence. Dates have been lengthily searched for verification to ensure accuracy, and everything has been chronologically chronicled, and that as briefly as possible, so as to leave it for the readers to investigate the history of the events mentioned with the aid of the seven hundred references whose works, with their dates, are given at the beginning of the book.

The illustrations, nearly a hundred in number, are chiefly from photos taken expressly for the work; but there are numerous facsimiles, the most interesting of which is decidedly that of the handwriting of St. Thomas Aquinas, the "Dumb Ox" of the Sorbonne? There are twenty-three specially-designed headings to sections and sub-sections of the work, and a specially-designed title-page. To say that the author is a former pupil of the school of St. Luke at Ghent, Belgium, is sufficient guarantee for the artistic treatment of the special designs. The author's address is: J. A. Randolph, 2 Halsey street, Cadogan Sq., London, S. W., England.

As long as we live in this world we cannot be without tribulation and temptation.—The Imitation.