

THE CASKET.

ESTABLISHED, 1852

The Casket

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY AT ANTI-GONISH, BY THE CASKET PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY (LIMITED), M. DONOVAN, MANAGER

Terms: \$1.00 per Year in Advance.

Shall we sharpen and refine the youthful intellect, and then leave it to exertment new powers upon the most sacred of subjects, as it will, and with the chance of receiving them wrongly or shall we proceed to feed it with divine truth, so it gains an appetite for knowledge? - CARDINAL NEWMAN.

THURSDAY, APRIL 4.

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT.

In our second last issue, in discussing the views of the Superintendent on religion in the public schools, we quoted him as saying that the teacher's character is the really important thing in the training of the young. The character of the Superintendent justly says, is an "object-lesson" in religion, which is unconsciously assimilated into the texture of the pupil's life. This, he, it is remembered, is true whether the assimilation be of good or evil. We cited the words of several prominent thinkers, Catholic and Protestant, in which the important truth expressed by the Superintendent is strongly emphasized. We prefaced these with an expression of our intention to show that the conclusion it contains is the very opposite of that which the Superintendent wishes to draw from it.

We may put Dr. McKay's argument briefly thus: It is true that religion is not formally taught in the public schools of Nova Scotia; but in virtue of the certificates of character exacted by the Education Office of all candidates for teachers' licenses, the teachers of the Province are of so exalted a character that they constitute object-lessons of the highest religious value, or, ought to be, satisfactory to persons of every denomination, whether Catholic or Protestant.

We have agreed to assume for the present that the required certificates are to be taken at their face value, and that the teachers possessing them are models of good character according to the notions of character entertained by the lay clergymen or justices granting the certificates. Here, then, we come face to face with the question, Are Catholics and Protestants agreed upon what the model Christian character is? Are the Catholic type and the Protestant type of character the same?

We find it very difficult, not to say impossible, to make our Protestant friends understand that it is utterly impossible for us ever to agree with them on any common system of doctrine to be taught to Catholic and Protestant children together in the schools. They apparently cannot understand our position in the matter. We can fancy them in despair saying to us: Well, at any rate, you can agree with us on the question of what constitutes true Christian character in the teacher, and after all that is the really important thing. This is the tacit assumption of the Superintendent. Alas! we have to disappoint them again. We admit the supreme importance of the teacher's character, but we altogether deny that the Catholic and Protestant types of character are identical. And now to prove our contention.

We know of no better means of bringing home this truth to the reader's mind than by quoting the words in which Cardinal Newman contrasts the views of character taken by the Church and the world. "Take," he says, "a mere beggar-woman, leazy, ragged and filthy and not over-scrupulous of truth—I do not say she had arrived at perfection—but if she is chaste, and sober, and obedient, and goes to her religious duties, and I am supposing not at all an impossible case, she will, in the eyes of the Church, have a prospect of heaven, which is quite closed and refused to the State's pattern-maid, the just, the upright, the generous, the honorable, the conscientious if he be all this not from a supernatural power." . . . but from mere natural virtue. . . . We venture to say that almost every Protestant who reads the sentence just quoted will be impressively shocked by it: his whole moral being will revolt against it. And is not the very fact that he is thus affected the strongest proof of what we are contending for—that Protestant and Catholic view of character are widely at variance?

Let us look at the question in the light of experience. Miss Frances Willard, the President of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, is known by reputation to most of our readers. Fighting, as she does, the evil of intemperance, she is a woman who is doing much good in the world. There is perhaps no religiously inclined Protestant mother in all Christen-

dom who would not be proud to have her daughter take Miss Willard as a model. We may justly take her then as a thoroughly respectable and estimable Protestant of the last class. Now let her die in her own words something about her inmost character. In her autobiography she says: "I always wanted . . . to be widely known, even loved, and believed in, the more widely the better. Every life has its master passion. This has been mine. Very few things warm my sympathy, but this couplet in the hymn-book did: "Make me little and unknown, Love and peace be my portion."

Its supreme absurdity angered rather than amused me, for who could be loved and prized by the Great Spirit and yet rejected by the lower spirits made by His image?"

"There is insanity, in all probability, a Protestant reader who will see anything amiss in this, and yet his glowing paganism will take away the breath of every devout Catholic. Observe, Miss Willard does not regard the sentiment as one too lofty for the ordinary Christian ever to reach—one which it were vain for any but the most exalted saint to strive to attain; no, its "supreme absurdity" weakens her sentiment, and "angers" rather than amazes her. Her "master passion" and supreme aim in life may not be an ignoble one in the sense of the world, but it is certainly not one which it is not a Christian's duty to denounce. His life in an abject creature's thing—who told His disciples that unless they became as little children, they should not enter the kingdom of heaven, who thanked His Father that He had hidden His truths from the great and wise and revealed them to the little ones—who, when He saw that the people would take Him by force and make Him king, fled to the mountain Himself alone."

If Miss Willard wished to become a teacher in the public schools of Nova Scotia, would she have any difficulty in obtaining the certificate of character required of candidates for licenses? And would not our Protestant friends consider it very unreasonable on our part if we objected to her as a proper teacher for our children? Just fancy the outcry to which such an objection would give rise! And yet what conscientious Catholic would consent to have the unscrupulous, pious vanity and pride, which she not only possesses, but glories in, and the bitter contempt and hatred with which she says she has ever regarded the cardinal Christian virtue of humility, "assimilated into the texture" of his children's character?

We have taken up but a single example from experience of this difference between the Catholic and the Protestant type of character. Even here we could confidently rest our case, but we shall cite others next week. Meanwhile we recommend to our readers the instance referred to by our able correspondent, David Crockett, in his last issue—the respective positions of the two bodies in relation to the sin of self-murder: and we ask them to think seriously over all these facts.

Dr. Saunders and the Fathers.

To the Editor of THE CASKET:

Sir,—I have read with interest "Occasional Contributor's" clever reply to Dr. Saunders in your last issue. I would suggest that you send a marked copy of that letter to Dr. Saunders, if you have not done so already. It will help to clarify his ideas, and goodness knows they need clarifying. It will also send him back to his logic, if he is not too old to learn.

Your contributor kept strictly to the main thesis of Dr. Saunders' letter; and wisely. It was a hopeless task to follow the doctor through all his controversial ramblings. And yet there is one passage of that remarkable letter which it seems a pity not to touch upon. It is this:

"Tertullian, Cyprian and Lactantius know nothing of special papal power. In the writings of the Greek Doctors Eusebius, St. Athanasius, St. Basil the Great, the two Gregories and St. Epiphanius, there is not one word about the special prerogatives of the popes. St. Chrysostom and the two Cyrils are equally silent on the subject. The Latins, Hilary, Irenaeus, Zeno, Lucifer, Sulpicius and St. Ambrose say nothing of this power of the popes."

I do not at all pretend to so wide an acquaintance with the writings of the Fathers as Dr. Saunders. I know enough about them, however, to be able to say that these statements of his are wide of the truth. Out of each group of early ecclesiastical writers whom he alleges to be silent about the special prerogatives of the popes, I will pick out two who shall witness against him. Others might also be cited, but the testimony of these is amply sufficient for my purpose. To dispense the statement that A and B, and C are silent it is enough to show that A, or B, or C speaks.

In the first group are Tertullian, Lactantius, and Cyprian. Let me sum up Tertullian's words, p. 304: "For if thou thinkest heaven is still closed, remember that the Lord left here the keys thereof to Peter, and through him to the Church."

Do you ask, How through Peter to the Church? The same writer will make answer in the *Præsentation of the same writer* in this magazine the apostolic charges reborn their origin in the church of the Smyrnaeans recount that Polycarp was placed there by John; as that of the Romans address Clement, ordained by Peter? And Cyprian, "Moreover, after all this, a pseudo-bishop, having been set up for themselves by heretics, they dare to sail, and to carry letters from schismatics and profane persons, to the chair of Peter, and to the principal Church, whence the unity of the priesthood took its rise; nor do they consider that the Romans are those—whom I say, was praised in the preaching of the Apostle,—to whom heresy cannot have access"—*Ep. to ad Corin.* p. 182.

St. Basil the Great and St. Epiphanius will speak for the Greek Doctors who are in the second group. In a letter to St. Athanasius, Basil writes, "It has seemed to us best fitting to send to the Bishop of Rome to supervise matters here, and to advise him to use his own authority in this business, choosing men able to undergo the toils of the journey, able too with mildness and firmness to reprove the perverse temper of parties here."—*Ep. lxxx. ad Athanasium*, p. 107. Epiphanius, *Adv. Haereticos*, p. 107, says: "However the succession of bishops in Rome was in the following order, Peter and Paul, and Cletus, Clement, Anacletus, Evaristus, Alexander, Xystus, Telephorus, Hyginus, . . . . . above as in the list. And let no one wonder that we have gone through each of these matters; for by means of these the manifest truth is forever pointed out." Of the primacy of Peter he says elsewhere, *In Jacobus*, p. 15: "He heard from that same God, Peter feed my lambs; to him was entrusted the shock he leads the way admirably in the power of his own master."

In the third group are St. Chrysostom and the two Cyrils. Let the first be heard: "Christ speaking to the chief of the Apostles says, Peter, I have said to thee, Peter, I have said to thee, thou shalt have power to bind on earth, and all that shall be bound on earth shall be bound in heaven, and all that shall be bound on earth shall be bound in heaven."—*De Sacerd.* p. 451. Writing to Pope Celestine concerning Nestorius, St. Cyril of Alexandria uses these words: "A God requires no homage also of us in these things, and as the long established custom of the churches advises that these things be communicated to your holiness, I necessarily write a second time to make known what follows."—*Ep. ix. p. 30*. To which the Pope replies: "Wherefore, having added to you the authority of this our throne, and using with power the succession of this our place, you will exact with rigorous firmness this definite sentence, etc."

Of the fourth and last group I will quote the two most eminent writers. In the sixth chapter of the first book *De Paedestantia*, p. 329, St. Ambrose writes: "Thou O Lord, didst say to Peter, when he excused himself from Thy washing his feet, if I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with me. What fellowship, then, can these men (Novatians) have with Thee; men who receive not the Keys of the Kingdom, and who deny that they ought to forgive sins? Which is, indeed, rightly acknowledged on their part; for they have not Peter's inheritance, who have not Peter's Chair." St. Hilary, addressing Pope Julius, says, *Proem. li. ex Opere Historico*, p. 329: "For this will be seen to be best, and by far the most befitting thing, if to the head, that is, to the see of the Apostle Peter, the priests of the Lord report from every one of the provinces."

These citations, to use a trite phrase, speak for themselves. I do not charge Dr. Saunders with wilful misstatement. It is plain, however, that he was ignorant of the subject he undertook to write upon; and in one who has any pretensions to scholarship such ignorance is quite excusable. AMEN.

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