

The Northwest Review

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

We hope to publish next week a full report of the interesting meeting of the Catholic Truth society last Monday evening. It was remarked by many members that those who did not attend that meeting will regret their absence. Mr. F. W. Russell's paper on the past and present position of Catholics in England was not only replete with valuable information, but written in a most scholarly, thoughtful and eloquent way. While holding out ground for hope that England would one day be largely Catholic, he believed in a gradual conquest of souls rather than in any sudden and overwhelming tide of conversions.

One of the hopeful signs mentioned at this C. T. S. meeting was the revival of the "Hail Mary" among non-Catholics. There is a society of Anglicans, the League of St. Lawrence, which advocates the revival of this prayer as a necessity of our age. "It is time," they say, "to defend the faith by a practice which will raise the loyalty of Christians." They hold that the omission of the Hail Mary accounts for the denial of the virginity of Christ's mother, and for the tendency to lower the Saviour of mankind to the level of a prophet, a philosopher, a mere preacher of righteousness. The Ave Maria adds that a proper understanding of the Blessed Virgin's place in Christian worship will have the happy effect of removing many stumbling-blocks in the way of reunion with the one true church.

MR. JOHN O'DONOHUE.

The Free Press of Wednesday last, in its report of the regular monthly meeting of the school board, had the following curious item of information:—

"A motion was offered by Messrs Ross and Browne, that the chairman of the building committees be asked to make arrangements for the laying of the corner stone of the Argyll school on Thursday. MR. O'DONOHUE SUGGESTED THAT THE CORNER STONE BE LAID WITH MASONIC HONORS; but Mr. Stuart objected to this course, that it would give offence to a portion of the community. An amendment, moved by Messrs. Wade and McPherson, was carried, that there be no ceremony."

To those who, at the recent laying of the corner stone of the new Masonic Temple, saw Mr. John O'Donohue on the platform clothed with Masonic regalia, this new announcement will cause little, if any, surprise. This gentleman seems anxious that all the world should know him to be a Freemason. But is it not edifying to note that his Protestant fellow-members are more solicitous for the good-will of the Catholic community than this "prominent Catholic?" Messrs. Stuart, Wade and McPherson, rightly

felt that it would be an offence against the Catholics of Winnipeg, and therefore impolitic at the present time, to inaugurate a public school with a rite condemned as anti-Christian by the Catholic Church.

What now becomes of Mr. John O'Donohue's claim to be a representative Catholic? How sorry a figure he now makes as the only nominal Catholic who could be persuaded to attack his co-religionists before the Privy Council at Ottawa?

We commend this incident to the careful consideration of all the Catholic press of the Dominion, not excepting "United Canada." The editor of the last named paper will surely not object to John as "more Catholic than the Pope," for, much as John professes to love the Church and seek its best interests, it is evident that he loves Masonry still more.

THE PREMIER AT THE CATHOLIC INDIAN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL OF ST. BONIFACE.

Last Friday, 13th inst., at about 5.30 in the afternoon, Sir Mackenzie Bowell, accompanied by the Hon. T. Mayne Daly and Mr. A. A. C. LaRiviere, M. P., visited the Industrial School for Indian youth at St. Boniface. There were present, to receive the Premier, the Rev. Father Daignault, chaplain of the institution, the Rev. Sister St. Therese and the several Sisters in charge of the Indian girls, Rev. Fathers Chartier, Cherrier, Drummond and Lajeunesse. After a few words of greeting the honored guests were conducted to the beautifully decorated reception hall, where the Indian boys and girls, drawn up in several tiers on a graded platform, sang in very good style a song of welcome. Then Albert Sinclair, a bright-looking Indian boy of twelve years old read, with remarkable distinctness and intelligence, the following address from a tastefully illuminated copy, which was afterwards presented with three charming nosegays to the Right Honorable Premier and his companions:

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR MACKENZIE BOWELL, PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA:

RIGHT HONORABLE SIR:

To day our Institution resounds with joy and gladness, since its happy inmates have the honor of welcoming within its humble precincts Canada's distinguished Prime Minister, the Honorable Sir Mackenzie Bowell, with his esteemed friend, the Minister of the Interior. Yes, Honored Gentlemen, your presence in our midst is an additional proof of the condescending solicitude of our noble Government in behalf of the poor children of the Prairie. While we realize that we can never make an adequate return for the countless advantages so generously bestowed upon us, still we solicit you, Most Honorable Sir and distinguished Friend to graciously accept the feeble expression of our gratitude, with a most cordial welcome from all the inmates of our dear school. Other tongues more eloquent than ours, will worthily proclaim your talents and extoll your noble deeds. But let it be the privilege of the Indian children to pray that all the cares and anxieties attending your elevated public position, may be changed into consolation and joy, and that your administration, so auspiciously inaugurated, may form one of the most remarkable in the history of our noble land.

The children of the St. Boniface Indian Industrial School. September, 13th 1895.

During the admirable delivery of this short address Sir Mackenzie Bowell was visibly moved. As he himself afterwards remarked, "he filled right up." Rising to reply, he spoke, in a most genial and fatherly manner, substantially as follows:

REVEREND FATHERS AND SISTERS AND MY DEAR CHILDREN:

I am more than surprised, I am astonished and delighted at everything I see in this Industrial School. When Mr. Daly came on the floor of the house asking for large sums of money for the Indian schools of British Columbia and the North West, and telling of the progress that was being made in those institutions, I was a little suspicious; in fact I did not believe him; but now I see for myself, and find that the progress of the schools of all denominations, Presbyterian, Methodist, English Church and Roman Catholic is indeed wonderful. Let me tell you here that Mr. Daly is your great friend. He is, if I may use the word, a father to you. It is his duty to see that that money is granted to the Indian schools throughout British Columbia, Manitoba and the North West; to see that the money is well expended in every case, and I am sure it is not only well expended but very well invested.

My dear children, I hope you will profit well by the teaching of the good Fathers and Sisters who give their lives for the cultivation of the young. You will receive instruction that will fit you for the different walks of life and prepare you to move in respectable society. Your teachers are also giving you a knowledge that will enable you to enjoy a happy eternity.

You know, boys, you live in a country where the highest offices are in the gift of the people, and I see no reason why some of you should not occupy the same position as my friend here (Mr. Daly). I was once a small boy like you myself, and had to work as you do, often from six o'clock in the morning as late as ten, eleven and even twelve at night. In those days, Reverend Gentlemen, there were no workmen's unions to see that we only worked eight or ten hours.

I hope, then, the day is not far distant when the children of the red men, as we call them, will take their place in the front ranks with the whites. Your intellects are as good as any, whether ours be mixed with Anglo-Saxon or Celtic blood. The little boy who read the address furnishes an example that your children have intellects to compare with the brightest in the land.

Our ancestors, the English and Scotch, —I will not say anything about the Irish for fear the Reverend Father here will fall foul of me,—lived like your fathers in hovels and huts, but by cultivation they have become the first people in the world; you can do the same. I expect to see these little girls take the place of their present teachers to train up their sisters and brothers in the way of civilization. Some of you are pretty big now, and must soon leave the school. Do not go back to the old ways of the wigwam. Remember what you have been taught and practise it. Do not go back. On you depends the elevation of your race. And, boys, (I am speaking now to the older ones who will understand me) do not marry girls beneath you, girls without any education. If a man marries a woman that is coarse and ignorant, she will drag him down to her own level. On the contrary, if she is cultivated and virtuous, she will raise her husband to her own level. Another thing, never be afraid of work. In business or whatever work you engage in, look to the interest of your employer. The boy who succeeds is the one who does not mind working an hour or two after time if his employer's interest demands it. I myself began working in a printer's office when I was quite a small boy and since then I have been earning my own living. My final advice, dear children, is: Let liquor alone, boys and girls, let it alone; it is the curse of your nation as it is of ours, and like all great curses, it ought to be shunned.

Excuse me for speaking so long; but when my heart is moved, I cannot easily stop.

This school is a proof that God does not forget the first possessors of the land; and I am proud that for seventy years I have belonged to a government that has aided so generously the noble cause; for it is one of the first charities to civilize and elevate the untutored children of forest and prairie.

The Hon. Mr. Daly then added a few words of thanks to the children, congratulating them on their singing which, he said, was even better than the last time he heard them. One felt, on listening to the Minister of the Interior, that he was quite at home with his dusky wards.

Sir Mackenzie then walked around among the children. When he came to Albert Sinclair, the reader of the address, he made him a present of a bank-note, and, putting his arm around his neck, he said: "My dear little man, you must work hard to improve the talents God has given you. One day, I hope, you may become a member of Parliament, and, when you are older, they will make you a senator like myself."

The working-day being over, there was no occasion to visit the workshops; but every other part of the building was carefully inspected by the Premier, who was profuse in expressions of approval and admiration for the cleanliness and neatness everywhere apparent.

The Ottawa Separate Schools.

From the True Witness.

The report of the Commissioners appointed to examine the state of the Separate Schools of Ottawa has created considerable comment. Our readers will doubtless pardon us for adding a few more words to what we have already said in last week's issue.

As to the origin of the Commission: It appears that a motion was brought up at the Ottawa Separate School Board, to investigate certain charges said to have been made by Rev. Brother Flamian,

Visitor of the Christian Brothers of the Province of Quebec, against Inspector White, concerning the report which he gave of his official inspection of the Ottawa Separate Schools. Some members of the board, desiring a further investigation, suggested that the Ontario Minister of Education be requested to appoint a Commission to investigate the said charges, to examine the city Separate Schools, and to report thereon. The Honorable Minister of Education, G. W. Ross, L. L. D., according to the request, appointed as commissioners, Rev. J. T. Foley, Mr. D. Cheney and William Scott, B. A. The first two having resigned, were replaced by Edward Ryan, M. D., and J. J. Tilley, Esq.

On presenting themselves at some of the Brothers' Schools, the Commissioners were told that they would not be received. It appears that the orders not to receive the Commissioners came from the Assistant Superior-General, then in Montreal, and were directed, not against the Government, but against the trustees, who called for an enquiry a few weeks after the Brothers had bound themselves by a written agreement to teach the schools for a year. Besides, the Commissioners were evidently not called to vindicate the Brothers, but to condemn them. The nature of the report was, therefore, a foregone conclusion. This is evident from an item that appeared in a Toronto paper at a time when the Commissioners had barely commenced their work. The item alluded to contained in a nutshell the whole report as far as it refers to the Brothers. The report is a sweeping condemnation of the teaching of the Brothers in Ottawa, but any impartial reader can see that it is one-sided throughout. The Brothers may have been wrong in refusing to accept the Commissioners when they first presented themselves, but the Government officials should have been satisfied with the kind attention they afterwards received.

The report is unfavorable in many respects. Some classes, especially of the Brothers' Schools, gave, according to the Commission, a poor account of themselves. It seems to us quite remarkable that the Commissioners have not mentioned an important fact affecting the schools at the time, and which, in a great measure, must have been the cause that better results were not obtained. We refer to the diphtheria which for many weeks had been prevalent in some parts of the city, and which at the time of the commission was still unabated, thereby reducing the number of pupils in some classes to one-half, or even less. If the Commissioners had in view to do justice to all concerned, they should, unquestionably, have noted this drawback and made due allowance for the same in the report which they have given to the public. Another obstacle to better results, and to which the report does not allude, was that in one of the English schools quite a large proportion of the pupils were French, yet they were subjected to the same examination as the English-speaking pupils.

The schools of Ottawa may be somewhat weak in comparison with other schools in Ontario, but this may be no fault of the teachers. Here in Montreal we know what difficulties our teachers have to contend with in schools in which the two languages have to be taught side by side. An inspector of experience does not expect to find the pupils of such schools as proficient in either English or French as if only one language were taught. Nor will he be disappointed if he finds such pupils weaker in history, geography and mathematics than in schools in which the teachers and pupils have to deal with one language only.

These gentlemen of the commission express themselves surprised to find teachers not knowing English. Now, we doubt that there is even one teacher in the Catholic schools of Ottawa who does not know both languages; but the teachers referred to may have felt some bashfulness in speaking English before Ontario professors. The commissioners speak of the progress the pupils should make in six months, yet our same worthy commissioners, though they must have been studying French more or less during the whole of their high school and university courses, did not, so far as we can learn, once open their mouths to put a question in French.

As the great object of the commission was to investigate the teaching of English in French schools, let us here give some attention to the English used by the very gentlemen who composed the commission.

(See report, page 19.) "On arriving at this school the next morning, Brother Director Mark informed them, etc." Who arrived? Brother Mark or the commissioners?

(Page 21.) "The boys count their fingers." Did the boys count their fingers or on their fingers?

(Page 21.) "The boys were apparently taught nothing," etc. Is "apparently" in its proper place?

(Page 43.) "Pick out the adverbs, etc." What do the commissioners mean by "pick out"? Is it a dignified expression?

(Page 43.) "Give the boundaries of the different zones and account for the position of the Tropic of Cancer and the Arctic Circle." Is "Arctic" spelled correctly?

"I have never seen his brother before." Is never properly used? Is "have seen" the correct tense?

(Page 43.) "Give three ways by which words are made to denote more than one, etc." What words? Nouns, prepositions, conjunctions or what? ["By which" should be "in which."—Ed. N. W. R.]

The commissioners say (page 33): "That the pupils were deficient in power to grasp the meanings of the questions, etc." This is not at all surprising if we judge from the above quotations.

(Page 33.) "The inadequate knowledge and the frequent mistakes of even the English-speaking teachers, showed that in many cases the literary qualifications of these teachers was not what it should be." Is "was" correct in number and tense? What noun does "it" represent? Does it agree with the noun in number?

Do the many mistakes in grammar, composition and style, throughout the report of the commissioners, show that the literary qualifications of these commissioners are what they should be? It cannot be said, in palliation of the many glaring literary blunders, that they were mere slips, since these gentlemen spent six or seven weeks at the report, had all the aid they needed from the Education Department, including the Honorable Dr. Ross himself, and had, of course, clever proof readers to see that it came from the press exactly as the press received it. Surely the commissioners themselves would be ashamed to ask the public to call their blunders slips, when we find in their whole report no excuse for the slips of either teachers or pupils, intimidated, as we might naturally suppose them to have been, by the presence of a Government Commission of examiners.

Whatever may be thought or said of the proficiency of the Ontario schools in mathematics, they must be, judging from the grammar and style of the Commissioners' report, sadly deficient in the very English a knowledge of which they flatter themselves to possess in an eminent degree.

Let our readers mark well that these gentlemen of the commission were selected from the galaxy of Ontario's literary lights, for the purpose, in part, of examining the literary attainments of others, and behold, in the report which they present to the public, the inimitable EXCELLENCE of their literary production.

Leaving this very grammatical report and its splendid literary style as a monument to the proficiency attained in English by the critics of the Ottawa schools, we desire to quote a paragraph from the last issue of the Liverpool Catholic Times on the "Collegiate Education" imparted by the Christian Brothers in the old country. We quote the following in support of our contention, expressed in our last issue, that the order throughout the whole world holds a foremost place in the ranks of educationalists, and the wholesale condemnation of the Ontario Commissioners is most unjust and malicious.

"In proportion as Ireland has lost, England has gained by the transfer to this side of the Channel of one of the foremost educationists of the Sister Islands. The placing of the established Catholic College of St. Peter and Paul at Prior Park, Bath, under the Irish Christian Brothers, besides being a remarkable recognition of their position as a teaching Order, has led to the appointment of one of their most distinguished brethren, Bro. W. A. Swan, to the presidency of that college. Brother Swan has a brilliant record. His long connection, extending over forty years, with the North Richmond-street schools, Dublin, which he raised to a very high standard of efficiency, was coincident with the later development of the admirable teaching system of the Christian Brothers, which now comprehends in addition to the elementary instruction it was primarily designed to impart to the children of the poor, an extensive higher grade education adapted to the needs of the middle classes. To the brilliant success at public competitive examinations which has followed this new departure Bro. Swan largely contributed. As a rule, the O'Connell or North Richmond-street schools headed the list at the Royal University examinations and led the way for all the other Christian schools in Ireland joining in the intermediate competition with uniformly successful results. A better selection for president of a college like Prior Park could not have been made, and we shall be much