

## SECULAR SCHOOLS.

### A Catholic Parent's Objections to Them.

#### PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION.

To the Editor of the Globe

SIR—Prompted by the recent utterances of Mr. James L. Hughes and the Rev. Mr. Chambers of your city, I desire as a Roman Catholic and a Separate School trustee to offer some comments on their suggested remedy for educating the children of Catholics and Protestants in the same schools by excluding the Bible and all religious training therefrom. An erroneous impression seems to prevail among Protestants generally that such a course would solve the difficulty, and that it should be accepted by our Catholic people.

The exclusion of the Bible and anything in the way of religious instruction would not help the matter with us at all, as this would only make the schools purely secular, which we object to more strongly than to their being Protestant. If some Protestants as well as some Catholics in particular localities have supposed that the exclusion of the Bible and religious instruction from the Public Schools would remove the objection to them as schools for Catholic children, they have, in my opinion, fallen into a great mistake. The question lies deeper than reading or not reading the Bible in the schools. It is not so much what is taught or inculcated in the Public Schools that renders them objectionable to us Catholics, as what is not and cannot be taught or inculcated in them. Education based on the principle that man is naturally perfectible or progressive, and which aims to cultivate the faculties of the soul in relation to the natural order, can never be beneficial either to the individual or to society. It is a false doctrine that the end of education, and, therefore, of life, is self culture, or the harmonious and complete development of all the natural faculties of the soul. The highest possible culture of our whole natural, intellectual, aesthetic, domestic and social, does not advance us a single step in the way we should go, or toward the true end and destiny of life. The only support for private or public virtue is religion, is in training the people in those principles which religion alone introduces and sustains.

#### WHAT CATHOLICS WANT.

And so, what Catholics want is, not that religion be excluded from the Public Schools, but schools in which they can teach fully and freely their religion to their own children. It is precisely these purely secular schools as proposed and advocated by Mr. Hughes and the Rev. Mr. Chambers, in which all education is divorced from religion—from the faith, precepts, services and discipline of the church—that we oppose. Nor do I think the solution offered of purely secular schools would satisfy the larger number of members of the different Protestant denominations, as is evident from the tenacity with which they insist on reading the Bible in the schools. They do not believe, any more than we Catholics do, in the utility or even practicability of divorcing what is called secular learning from religion. All education, they hold as well as we, that is not religious, is necessarily anti-religious. This is a case in which there is and can be no neutrality. What does it imply? If carried strictly out to the exclusion of everything religious, or having a religious tendency, it must consistently demand a like exclusion of everything that in the least manifests the opposite tendency. It does not alter the case

in the least that opinions regarded as irreligious, or as undermining or in any way weakening the grounds of religious belief, take to themselves the precious names of literature, or politics, or political economy, or phrenology, or the philosophy of history. The thoughtful, religious man might be willing to forego his objection if there were or could be real impartiality. He might trust a true, moral and religious training as fully able to counteract anything of an opposite tendency. But to let in the enemy and then take away the weapon of defence—this is a neutrality hard to be understood.

#### WHAT IS SECULAR?

Then, again, what is secular? Those who attempt to define it would perhaps begin with a negative. It is that which has no connection with religion, no aspects, no relations, no tendencies, no suggestions beyond this world, or the narrowest view of it. Now, let him apply it to the particular branches of education. There is the learning of the alphabet, spelling, reading; but what shall the child read? It would be very difficult to find a mere reading book—unless the contents were an empty gable—that would not somewhere and in some way betray moral or immoral, religious or irreligious ideas, according to the judgment of some minds. Arithmetic is secular. Geography is secular, though I have seen some things under the head of physical geography that some classes of religionists might object to as betraying a spirit hostile to the idea of the earth's creation in any form. Then the pure mathematics; no thinking man would pretend that the departments of life and motion, chemistry, dynamics, physiology, could be studied apart from a higher class of ideas. But secularity would interfere here in a very strange way. When these roads of knowledge thus tend upward toward the eternal light, it would shut down the gate and eject the book.

In other departments it is still more difficult to set the secular bound. History, the philosophy of history, political philosophy, psychology, ethics, however strong the effort to dereligionize them, do all, when left to their proper expansion, spurn any such bounds. Art, too, when wholly secularized; poetry, stripped of its religious ideality; how long would they resist such a harrowing, suffocating process? I consider wholly secular education in our schools utterly impracticable, and even if it were practicable neither Catholics or Protestants who believe at all in religion would consent to be taxed to support infidel or atheistic education, and all so-called secular education is nothing else.

Catholics have no desire, notwithstanding what is often said to the contrary, to break up the Public School system or defeat the end it contemplates, that of providing a good common education for all the children of the land, especially the children of the poorer classes. The Public School system as it is seems to suit all the different Protestant denominations, and we have no wish to interfere with it. They whom it concerns particularly are satisfied, and that is enough for us. All we want is schools for ourselves, to be supported at our own expense, in which we can fully and freely teach our own children in the manner which seems best to us, and why Protestants should object to such I am at a loss to understand. It costs them nothing, and if in the schools they provide they give, as they claim they do, but which I question very much, a superior education to that given in our schools, then it is, not they, who will be the losers by such.

If a Protestant majority cannot see its way clear to be generous in dealing with a Catholic minority, they should least not be just. CATHOLIC PARENT.

## DEDICATION AT OSHTAWA

(Continued from Page 1.)

Lead, Kindly Light.  
Tantum Ergo, Goeb, soloists Miss Elliott,  
Mr. Ward.  
Confirma Hoc Deus, Mr. Anglin.

#### IN THE EVENING.

In the evening Vespers were sung and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament given by His Lordship Bishop O'Connor, assisted by Fathers Harris and Mulcahy.

After the Magnificat, Vicar-General McCann preached an eloquent sermon on devotion to the Blessed Virgin, taking for his text the salutation of the people of Israel to Judith, "Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel, and the honor of all our people."

This salutation was the honor done to Judith when she returned from the camp of the enemy, whither she had gone in obedience to the bidding from on high and slain King Holofernes who had also destroyed her people. Writers have seen in this victory of Judith over the enemy of Israel a premonition of the victory of the Blessed Virgin over the demons, and in Judith herself and her honors they have seen the prototype of Mary whom all nations call blessed. In a sense higher than in the case of Judith the people of all ages have invoked Mary as the glory of Jerusalem and the joy of the human race, because she as the humble minister of God was instrumental in freeing us of the penalty of sin. In every age she has been recognized and honored. Devotion to her is not of yesterday. In every age, from the time of the Apostles to our own day, we can trace it. Her history is interwoven with the history of the Church. Her dignity and honor increased year after year until the vision that St. John saw from his island home was realized upon earth, "I saw a great wonder in the heavens; a woman clad with the sun, the moon beneath her feet, and about her head a crown of twelve stars."

To-day as in every age people are devoted to the Mother of God. The Church has always encouraged this devotion to her, because it is founded upon a solid basis. Some there are who speak of her as of an ordinary person. They object to our devotion because they fear that she may come to take the place of God in our adoration. In this they are all wrong. Every Catholic knows that God alone is to be adored; that there is but one mediator, Jesus Christ; one name alone by which men can be saved; one God alone, unapproachable, a stern and jealous God. But the Blessed Virgin is only a creature like ourselves, re-deemed as we were, though singled out in an especial manner for divine favor; we know that she has been singled out for the brightest diadem, a creature elevated above the angels and the archangels and placed in the proud position of Mother of God. She is therefore raised to a wondrous eminence.

With all this she robs nothing of her Son. The mountain that is covered with glories of color robs nothing from the Sun. The beauty of the landscape is the outcome and reflection of the warmth of the orb of day. So when we observe the power and adornments and graces of the Blessed Virgin, we are able to learn something of the great Being from whose treasure house these things come. The Blessed Virgin is honored only because God Himself has so honored her.

Some will not admit the great fact of the incarnation. They cannot understand it. The Church teaches that the incarnation is a great truth. Mary became the Mother of Jesus Christ by the power and operation of the Holy Ghost, and, consequently was



You've seen and heard the hoarse-voiced man at the big railway stations, calling the trains. He tells where each one is going and keeps people from taking wrong trains — they pay attention. One's physical feelings are like a "train caller." They announce the starting of all trains of disease. Most all trains of disease lead to consumption, because the assumption is a blood disorder and because the blood must be purified before any disease can make much headway.

The secret of health is to keep the blood pure and full of strength. When a man or woman loses flesh and vitality, there is something wrong in the blood. The start of it is likely to be in the stomach or bowels, and if they are put in order the trouble gradually stops. Consumption is a germ disease, but if the blood is good, and keeps the lungs strong and healthy, the germs cannot find a place to lodge and are cast off. If there is a weak spot, the germ will find it. Even after that, strong and pure blood will strengthen the lungs so that they can gradually rid themselves of the germ. It is by creating strength and purity that Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery cures consumption and other diseases. It makes one gain flesh — not flabby, oily fat, but sound, firm, useful, healthy flesh. Hundreds of patients have testified to its wonderfully beneficial effects in many diseases and especially in the persistent consumption.

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the Mother of God. God elevated her to that position and she cannot be displaced. It was not the Church but God who placed her above all the children of men; the Church but accepts the act of God.

The holy scriptures contain many references to her. In the very beginning she is indicated. After the creation came the fall and after the warning to the serpent that the seed of the woman would crush his head. In Eden there was the tree, Eve the woman, the fall from grace, and the serpent triumphant. On the tree of Calvary there hung the most precious barden; below was the woman, the second Eve. In Eden the woman was defeated, the devil triumphant, on Calvary the demon was vanquished, and woman triumphant. Thus the prophecy was fulfilled.

The prophet Isaiah beheld a wondrous vision. Rapt in ecstasy he looked down the mighty aisles of the future and saw a sight of loveliness and beauty. God will give a sign. A virgin will conceive and will bring forth a son and he will be called Emmanuel (God with us.)

The New Testament tells of the rap-ture of St. Elizabeth at being visited by the Mother of her Lord. Mary herself sang that beautiful canticle which has been sung ever since, "My soul hath magnified the Lord." "Behold all nations shall call me blessed."

So it has been. Was Mary unrecognized in the early ages? On the contrary the greatest minds known in the Church have devoted themselves to her and have professed themselves unable to express their appreciation of her high qualities. Two facts will serve to illustrate this. In the year 325 there was a Council of the Bishops. A great man had denied the divinity of Christ, and the Bishops came from all parts of the world where they had long suffered for their religion, and attested the judgment of the Church that Jesus Christ is God and Mary is His Mother. Again in the next century a teacher of the Word denied that the Blessed Virgin was the Mother of God. The people would not bear him. The assembled prelates again set forth the belief of the whole Church on this question.