

## CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

## THE CLASS WORK OF CANADA SCHOOLS.

One of the Finest and Most Praiseworthy Educational Exhibits at the World's Fair—A Splendid Vindication of the Efficiency Attained Under the Admirable and Just Denominational School System in Vogue in the Dominion.

CHICAGO, Aug. 5.—I have examined Canada's educational exhibit. It contains so much of interest to Americans who reside in this glorious republic, that I am constrained to devote a special letter to the theme. It must be admitted that in some things England is as mentally broad as the wide expanse of her political possessions. No matter what may be her shortcomings, when education is in question she rises to the full height and extends to the widest range of the subject. After carefully regarding her attitude on the school question in our "sister country," I have no hesitancy in pronouncing the talk about annexation that we occasionally hear, as the weakest bit of mental milk-pap with which our daily papers, off and on, furnish their readers. You will admit this ere I have done.

In par. 141, Sect. II., Chap. IV., of

THE "SCHOOL LAW,"

(edition 1891), I read as follows: "If, in any municipality, the regulations and arrangements, made by the school commissioners for the management of any school, are not agreeable to any member, whatever of the proprietors, occupants, tenants, or rate-payers, professing a religious faith different from that of the majority of the inhabitants of such municipality, such proprietors, occupants, tenants and rate-payers may signify such dissent in writing, to the chairman of the commissioners. The law then reads so as to grant the dissenting minority the right to elect three trustees for the management of its school affairs."

This is the broadest piece of legislation ever admitted into any code of public instruction! And that's the law in England's Catholic Province of Quebec. Now as to the application of that law. Judge Sicotte in the case, "Cushing vs. the School Trustees of Acton Vale" decided "That each of the different sects forming the minority can legally demand a school and board of school trustees of its own." Such an interpretation made in the Catholic Province of Quebec shows that the judicial mind take the legislative acts to mean simply this:

THE ROMAN CATHOLICS AND THE PROTESTANTS MAY EACH HAVE SCHOOLS OF THEIR OWN.

Thus the tax money for public instruction taken from the Roman Catholic tax-payers is administered by the various Roman Catholic boards of school commissioners for the education of Roman Catholic children. Thus the tax money for public instruction, taken from Protestant tax-payers is administered by the various Protestant boards of school commissioners for the education of Protestant children. The Province of Quebec is Catholic. The Province of Ontario is Protestant. These provinces have their exhibits side by side on the gallery of the Liberal Art's building. I would that it were in my power to take every man, woman and child in this glorious republic through these two exhibits, so that the full force the detailed completeness of Quebec's superiority could be brought home to their inner hearts by the silent eloquence of every letter and figure and stitch and stroke in her vast display. Take from the exhibit of the Province of Ontario the work from the Catholic school and the paucity of what remains will not redound to the honor of any country's educational facilities. Figures will bear me out. There are 5,876 public (Protestant) schools in the Province of Ontario. This number excludes kindergarten, high schools, collegiate institutions, special schools, etc. In plain language it represents the schools of the people. There are 289 Roman Catholic separate schools in the Province of Ontario. In the catalogue of Ontario's educational exhibit I find twenty and one-half pages devoted to a detailed specification of the display made by its 5,876 public (Pro-

testant) schools. The 289 Roman Catholic separate schools in that same catalogue require eight and one-quarter pages for the detailed specification of the exhibit they make. That is to say, the Protestant schools are a little more than twenty times as numerous as the Roman Catholic schools. Yet, they require only two and a half times the space to detail the display of their work. Now, let any fair-minded jury in the world decide which of these two classes of schools are really doing the work! But let me go farther. These "so called public schools" have their displays numbered on the catalogue from 275 to 710. The difference—435—represents the detailed total of the separate portions of their exhibit. Take from this sixty photographs of buildings, etc., each appearing in the catalogue with a special number. The remainder, 375, represents the total quantity of the exhibits that have come from the 5,876 public schools in Ontario.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC SEPARATE SCHOOLS of the same province are accredited in the same catalogue with exhibits from 709 to 956. The difference less thirteen photographs of buildings, etc., will leave them 234 as the total quantity of class work material sent to the exposition. Now compare:

Five thousand eight hundred and twenty-five public schools send 375 aggregate exhibits.

Two hundred and eighty-nine Roman Catholic separate schools send 234 aggregate exhibits.

This needs no comment. It would be eloquence itself to an African Kaffir or an Australian Bushman. The De La Salle institute of Toronto simply distances all competitors in the entire display made by Ontario. The work sent from that institution is superior to any other work in the exhibit of its province. All of the public schools in the city of Hamilton have not sent up as much material as this one institution displays! As to quality enough is said when I find at its head the name of a brother of the Christian schools, Rev. Brother Odo Baldwin. With Catholics throughout the country the name of a Christian Brother is synonymous with all that is excellent in education. Now let us turn to the Province of Quebec. The of Montreal has a population which contains about three Catholics to one Protestant. The Protestants are much the wealthier class. Their school tax is equivalent in the aggregate to the amount coming from the Roman Catholic population. The Roman Catholics have to care for three times the number of children, yet have but the same amount of money to do it with. Montreal is in population

## A TYPICAL CATHOLIC CITY.

Now, from the world's Columbian statistics let us compare. Under the control of the Roman Catholic commissioners of Montreal there are thirty-five schools. These schools are supported by the school tax gathered from the Roman Catholics. Over and above this there are in the city of Montreal independent Roman Catholic institutions as follows: One university, three seminaries, one normal school, three colleges, seven academies, two model schools, one school of art and manufactures, nine grammar schools, five asylum schools, one reform school, one industrial orphanage, one institution for the deaf and dumb and two kindergartens. This totals thirty-seven educational establishments supported by Catholics over and above the school tax. Here, then, is a city with a population of 216,650 souls. Of this number 162,984 are Roman Catholics and 53,666 are Protestants. The Roman Catholics have two establishments of learning from kindergartens up to a university. The Protestants have not more than twenty schools. Thus the Roman Catholics with three times the population and the same amount of money, support four times the number of schools. This will give a comprehensive idea of the comparative educational facilities in

## THE CATHOLIC PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.

I have taken Montreal as a type because I was unable to get the figures of the entire province. The display made by all the Protestant schools throughout the Province of Quebec is so meagre as to be unworthy of notice. Quebec received 1,700 square feet of floor space. Her Protestant schools do not cover 125 square feet. Yet, were the proportion as it should be, their display would require about 575 square feet. But her Catholic schools are there. Volumes and volumes of glorious work are heaped upon the counters. The walls are hung

with the deft products of pen and pencil, of stub and brush, of the crochet hook and tatting needle. The floral glories of Canada's glens and heights were gathered in great hebaria by Catholic children and at the World's Fair bespeaking the beauties of the land that bred them. Her rivers and islands, her cities and towns, have been moulded in plaster by Catholic hands and bespeak the scenic beauties and water wealth of Catholic Canada to the eyes of the nations that have met on a common ground at the World's Fair. Oh! It is another triumph for Catholic education. I would like to go into a detailed account of this exhibit. It is worthy of it. But excellent features are so numerous that I must content myself with referring only to the remarkable ones. In the first place the exhibit represents work from

## SCHOOLS IN CHARGE OF RELIGIOUS AND SECULARS.

About eighteen religious orders have taken part in the display. It is needless to say that the work from their schools is superior to that from the establishments in charge of seculars. It cannot be otherwise. I hold it as a psychological axiom—the soul unfettered by natural affections is best fitted to lift other souls to higher things. Now, the secular teacher is weighed down by the cares of life, the love of wife and child. The religious educator is as free as the brown winged lark that, shaking the dew from her wings, mounts her to the sky and sings her matins to God. His one business is education. He does not teach today and take a wife to-morrow and go into business the third day. Teaching with him is not as it is with the secular. He teaches for Christ's sake; the secular for mammon's. If there be any exception to this rule that exception but proves the rule. I appeal again to figures. I find in the report of the schools controlled by the Roman Catholic board of school commissioners that the teachers employed in the institution in charge of seculars receive salaries as follows:

Principals not less than \$800 nor more than \$1,500 a year.

Teachers not less than \$400 nor more than \$1,000 a year.

In the same report I find in the schools directed by the Christian Brothers that the brothers, directors, receive \$550 a year, the brothers, professors, \$250 a year, and yet, these same Christian Brothers that receive a paltry \$250 for their year's service, have sent the work that makes the exhibit of the Province of Quebec the magnificent triumph it is. And those seculars that receive their \$400 to \$1,000 a year have sent work that better had the great mass of it never been sent at all. It would be a wise thing if the Roman Catholic board of school commissioners of the Province of Quebec would, as a body, come to the fair and see what returns they are getting for an expenditure of \$400 to \$1,000 a year, as contrasted with the work done in the class of a religious teacher with a paltry salary of \$250 a year. I am certain that 99 per cent. of the work from these secular Catholic schools would be ordered home. And it should be. Catholic pride makes me speak thus. There are schools of this class in the city of Montreal that, I am told, are regarded with admiration, looked on as the acme of perfection. I saw some of the work they have sent. Thus, I thought to myself, as I looked at it, even Canada does the fine building, the beautiful property, give a glitter to the sham within. The most notable feature of the Canadian educational exhibit is the magnificent pen work done by the pupils of the Christian Brothers. In their commercial academy of Quebec, and their boarding school at Mount St. Louis, Montreal, the writing is raised to the dignity of a fine art.

IN NO OTHER EDUCATIONAL EXHIBIT AT THE WORLD'S FAIR IS IT EVEN EQUALLED.

Ten or twelve years ago a number of their old pupils formed themselves into a penmen's club. These gentlemen have displays in Quebec's educational department. A Chicago professional penman, I. W. Pearson, 43 McVicker's theater, saw the work and enquiring as to the amount the artist, A. O. Matton, had received, immediately requested to be put in communication with. The training

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that developed that artist and many others, whose works are displayed in this exhibit, is what the Christian Brothers give their pupils in Canada. The same care is noticeable in all their class work—French, English, mathematics, drawing, from simple linear to freehand, from projection to tinted mechanical and architectural work—in fact in every branch they teach. Verily, their display is the crowning glory of the schools and colleges for boys in the Catholic Province of Quebec. The congregation of Notre Dame have the grandest display made by the schools for girls. There are hundreds of pieces displayed in the Fine Art gallery not as good as the generality of the sheets in this beautiful volume. They have three cases about 2½ feet square and about 9 feet high and filled with the most beautiful needle work. St. Viateur's college, Joliette, St. Laurent, has very creditable and comprehensive display of their entire college curriculum by bound volumes of class work. Their classical papers are very good, as also are the papers on philosophy and zoology. The work from the institute for the blind in charge of the Grey Nuns is very interesting, particularly an original lace design worked out by a blind girl of thirteen. The Sisters of the Holy Cross have sent the most complete herbarium in the entire exhibit. The

## SISTERS OF ST. ANNE

have some work that is wonderful. For instance a volume of knitting so well done that passers by thought it well worth while to steal from it. It has now to be kept under lock and key. The work of their pupils in water colors and crayon is certainly far above the ordinary. And so I might go on with words of praise for every exhibit from schools in charge of religious teachers. In view of all that I have said what sane man will believe that a people treated with so much justice will relinquish their liberties to come under a government that will make him pay to support non-sectarian schools to which they prefer not to send their children. Why cannot the school question be settled in this country as it is in Canada? Why cannot the money which Catholics now pay to support state schools be turned over to a board of Roman Catholic commissioners for the management of their school affairs? It is done in Canada, in the Catholic Province of Quebec as well as in the Protestant Province of Ontario. It is the simplest solution of the so-called school question. Catholics have no desire to destroy state schools. They are proud of their country which does so much to advance the intellectual status of her people. Why cannot that be conceded to us in this country of Religious Liberty which is granted beneath a government that has an established religion. Statesmen, in the name of justice and honor, consider these little facts.—*Catholic Universe*.

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