

The Northwest Review

IS PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT 178 PRINCESS STREET. EVERY WEDNESDAY BY E. J. DERMODY & CO.

ADVERTISING RATES. made known on application. Orders to discontinue advertisements must be sent to this office in writing.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES. The Northwest Review \$2 a year, \$1 for six months.

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OUR ARCHBISHOP'S LETTER. St. Boniface, May 10th, 1883. DEAR SIR,—I see by the last issue of the Northwest Review that you have been intrusted by the directors of the journal with the management of the same.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The P. P. A. is repudiated on every side by everything that has any claim to respectability. The Patrons of Industry very emphatically declined an invitation to join the foul moral blot on Protestantism—called the P. P. A.

The Kansas City Catholic has the following which we commended to the careful perusal of the Rev. Dr. King and those Protestants of Manitoba who hope to perpetuate that monstrous iniquity—the present Manitoba Protestant school systems: At a recent meeting of the Ministers Alliance, Dr. Healy complained "that religion was not being introduced into schools, but was slowly being eliminated. It was the unanimous opinion of all present."

SIZING UP THE POSITION.

The Canada Presbyterian seems to have grasped the situation in the Northwest better than the Governor General in Council, in regard to the ordinance of 1892 and its effects on the Catholic schools. The order in council refusing to disallow the ordinance says that it did not interfere with Catholic schools or lessen their powers, while the Presbyterian says:

"An open highway now lies before the people of the Northwest on which to go forward to do a great and lasting work of general, sound education in secular knowledge. Happy are they to have escaped the difficulty which has been imposed upon us in Ontario, and which has led to and perpetuates friction in so many ways, and which so much prevents the breaking down of the prejudices of various kinds which now separate as citizens Roman Catholics and Protestants."

an ordinance may not legally abolish a school system but it may strip it of all its privileges in such a way as to practically arrive at the same result. That is what has taken place in the Northwest Territories, and that is what the Canada Presbyterian is congratulating the Northwest about when it says that "happy are they to have escaped the difficulty which has been imposed upon us in Ontario and which has led to and perpetuates friction in so many ways etc."

amount, per capita, would be only insignificant, at most, even though every word of the Free Press charge were true. Any one can see at a glance how far-fetched and dishonest was the comparison, even though the charge were true. But what will the public think of the Free Press charge when it has been clearly proven that the Protestants of Montreal enjoy a larger exemption of church property, etc., than do the Catholics. A Catholic, writing to the Free Press in reply to this allegation, gives some startling figures which completely knock the bottom out of its charges.

WHY NOT ADMIT FACTS?

A few weeks ago the Free Press, a journal which, from its many great advantages, should rank among the greatest moral forces in the community, stated that the Bishops of Quebec, by refusing to allow the church property to be taxed, compelled Protestants to support the Roman Catholic institutions. Whenever any narrow-minded literary rag-picker is anxious to find an excuse for some disgraceful act on the part of his friends, he usually makes some broad general charges against the Bishops of Quebec. It is always a safe ground for the ordinary slanderer, for two reasons, (1) because Quebec is a large province and there are several bishops there, and, (2) because the fanatics and bigots, to whose taste he caters, are ready to believe any statements, however false, if they are only seasoned with "bishops" and "Quebec."

less schools. To make the schools secular would only increase the Roman Catholic opposition towards them." No doubt the Roman Catholic Hierarchy are opposed to secular schools, but who authorized Mr. Fisher to say that the Catholic bishops are ten times more opposed to purely secular schools than to Protestant non-sectarian schools? No doubt the Catholic Hierarchy would ten times sooner see Protestant morality taught to Protestant children than to see them educated in secular schools, but that does not mean that the Catholic Bishops would prefer Protestant non-sectarian schools for Catholic children. Mr. Fisher must know that there is no common non-sectarian platform on which Protestants and Catholics can meet. The two systems are as oil and water; they will not assimilate. If then, the laws of the country say they must meet, and be educated in the same class room, the makers of the laws should, in the interests of peace, harmony, equality and justice, see that they meet on a neutral, that is a strictly secular ground. Mr. James Fisher then stated what is not exactly true when he said that the Roman Catholic Hierarchy are ten times more opposed to purely secular than to Protestant non-sectarian schools. Secular schools are not to our taste, they are wrong in principle and degrading in morals; they inculcate a theory that has for its chief plank a negation of God, but to Catholics they are infinitely preferable to a system that teaches an erroneous principle in religion. The schools of Manitoba are non-sectarian to the Protestants; they contain just as much Protestant sectarianism as the various Protestant sects can agree upon, but to Catholics they are, for that very reason, Protestant. Messrs. Sifton, Cameron and Fisher know this, the whole dishonest outfit know it. If they be honest and wish to retain Protestant non-sectarian religion in their schools, let them be equally fair with us and give us our schools, but if not, then let them not compel us to pay for what they want; let them be fair enough to not ask from the state for themselves what they are unwilling to grant us. Let their schools be abolished as well as ours and let us meet on common neutral ground.

IS IT SETTLED?

No doubt the Free Press would like to think that the Manitoba School question was settled. Notwithstanding the fact that it has published in its columns the fact that the Dominion Government has decided to appeal the case to the Privy Council; notwithstanding the further statement that Mr. Dalton McCarthy, a gentleman in no way partial to us, gives it as his opinion that the minority will probably win before the Privy Council, our contemporary, who pretends to have so much respect for the courts, says that the question is settled in Manitoba. We remember quite well that when the case was previously pending before that august tribunal, the Tribune and all the organs of the government were saying that they cared not what the decision of the Privy Council might be that they would not submit if their lordships decided against Manitoba. We can hardly suppose that that is the ground which the Free Press takes, when it says that the case is already settled. Let us tell the Free Press that that kind of argument might suit the Tribune but it cannot be used by a respectable and common sense journal. If the Privy Council decide in our favor, and say that the Catholics have rights, then no government in Canada dare refuse it. If they did, think you, the Imperial government who ratified those laws would allow of such a breach of faith. The Imperial government is not likely to look upon its responsibilities in such an unjust way. And even if every court in the realm decide against us, we believe, with "Catholic Layman," that injustice and persecution can never settle it; "it will only be settled when honesty and fair play once more dictate the educational policy of the province."

THE IRISHMAN.

By James Orr. The savage loves his native shore, Tho' rude the soil and chill the air, Then well may Erin's sons adore His cottage, hives and tubelike. His cotage hives and tubelike. What food reflects a shore so sweet As Shannon great or pastoral Bann? Or which a friend or foe can meet So generous as an Irishman? His hand is rash, his heart is warm, But honesty is still his guide; He may be duped, but won't be dared, More fit to practice than to plan; He dearly earns his poorward, And spends it like an Irishman. If poor or strange for you he'll pay, And guide you where you safe may be; If you're his guest, while'er you stay His cottage hives and tubelike. His inmost soul he'll unlock, And if he may your secrets seek, Your confidence he seems to mock, For faithful is an Irishman. Ay, honor bound in we or weal, But honor she bids he dares to do; Try him with bribes—they won't prevail, Prove him in fire—you'll find him true. He seeks not safety, let his post Be where he's caught in a danger's van; And if the field of fame be lost, It won't be won by an Irishman. Erin! I loved land! from age to age Be thou more great, more famed, more free; May peace be thine, or should'st thou Defensive war, cheap victory! May plenty bloom in every field Which gentle breezes softly fan, And cheerful smiles serenely lid The home of every Irishman. Any one troubled at night with a persistent cough can procure much-needed relief by taking a dose of Ayer's Cherry Pectoral.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Why His Grace Holds Back.

To the Editor of the Northwest Review. Sir,—A series of letters on educational matters in Manitoba has appeared in the Tribune under the nom de plume of "Candid Catholic," who seems to labor under the delusion that the Catholics of this province may avail themselves of the public schools in the absence of Catholic schools of the same efficiency. So far his arguments have not been met except that a "Parent" proved to his own satisfaction that the Catholic schools were as efficient as the others, because that was his opinion. Another writer in a local paper disposed of his contention by calling him a "Protestant," while still a third, equally logical, brushed his theories aside by declaring that they were written by "a woman." Notwithstanding these scathing criticisms, "Candid Catholic" would not stay crushed and I am instructed to take the matter up with special reference to his letter in your issue of the 22nd ult., and endeavor to convince him, if possible, that his efforts to make us practical converts of the public school system is not likely to be successful in the near future. The volume of matter that has been written on this question has had the effect of confusing the average reader, and of intensifying the feelings of bitterness on both sides which it has engendered, and my purpose in this article is to show how the matter stands at present, and why Catholics cannot use the public schools.

For twenty years the Catholics of Manitoba had their own schools; those schools were established by law, and were satisfactory to those immediately concerned; a change was never looked for nor desired; all looked forward to the continuance of those schools without molestation or interference for the time to come. But suddenly, without note or warning, their cherished school system was swept out of existence; without their wishes or their interests being consulted, their ideal school system was ruthlessly destroyed, so far, at least, as the Manitoba legislature could destroy it. The right of the legislature was disputed, and action taken in the courts, with the result, so far, in favor of the local government; but it is still in the hands of the Dominion government, and will be practically sub judice until that government gives its final decision as to whether it ought or ought not to interfere in behalf of the Catholics of Manitoba. While the case is thus pending, the Catholics will have to support their own schools, and at the same time pay their taxes to the public schools, and in this way help to educate their children and their non-Catholic neighbors. We about the inferior character of our schools, but there would be nothing surprising in such inferiority if true, as we have to keep up our own schools and at the same time contribute to the maintenance of the public schools equally with those who reap the benefit of them. We are sometimes asked why we do not send our children to the public schools, where a superior teaching and advantages are said to be found, and I will try to give the answer. One of the hardest things for a non-Catholic to understand is, why Catholics so implicitly obey their pastors in matters of faith, morals and discipline. One of the fundamental principles of the Catholic religion is obedience to lawful authority both in civil and spiritual matters. The Catholic believes that Christ established His church here upon earth, that He gave His apostles and their lawful successors absolute authority to rule over that church, under a visible head; that He promised to guide His church for all time, and that He has kept His promise. He believes that the bishops are the lawful successors of the apostles and the divinely-appointed rulers of the church. Every bishop is absolute ruler in spiritual matters in his own diocese, and in those spiritual matters is subject only to the Pope, the visible head of the church, to whom alone he is responsible for the government of his see; he is the administrator of the laws of the church, the exponent of her doctrines and the judge of her requirements. Every member of the church is, therefore, bound to obey his bishop in matters of faith, morals and discipline (discipline means the rules made by the bishop for the management of the diocese) and there is no appeal except to the Holy See. In civil and temporal matters he must, of course, obey the civil authorities.

His Grace, the Archbishop of St. Boniface, being the spiritual ruler and guide of his people in this archdiocese, they are bound to follow his instructions in those three matters above referred to, and as education comes under the heads of morals and discipline, it will be seen that they cannot use the public schools until he gives them permission to do so. It may be asked, why does he not compromise the matter with the local government and have the public schools so arranged that Catholic children may attend them. Bishops are not in the habit of compromising matters that might militate against the spiritual interests of their people, but in this case it is morally impossible for our archbishop to take any step whatever towards changing the existing state of the schools, even if disposed to do so. The Dominion government is already stated, and if he should move a finger in the way of coming to an understanding with the local government, that moment would the whole case back in his face and congratulate themselves on so favorable an opportunity to get rid of an embarrassing question, so that whatever views His Grace may hold as to what he should do in the event of the case being ultimately decided against him, it is quite certain that his hands are now tied and will be until a final decision is given by the government at Ottawa.

Regarding the charge made that Catholic schools are not as good as the others, I am not called upon to pronounce upon their good or bad qualities here, but in cases where pupils have reached the limit of the curriculum in the Catholic schools, or for some other good cause, His Grace will readily give permission to such pupils to attend the public schools when the reasons for it are laid before him. But pupils who in this way go to the public school are liable to be deprived of the privilege of receiving religious instruction at Sunday school with the other Catholic children; although it may not always be so.

From what I have stated "Candid Catholic" will, I am sure, see how futile it is to think that we can adopt the public school system while the Dominion government has our own schools under advisement. It is not a question of efficiency, but one of expediency; a question over which we have no control, and with which our venerable archbishop cannot at present interfere.

President of St. Joseph and Catholic Truth Society of Western Canada.

The C. M. B. A. and the Black Ball. To the Editor of the Northwest Review. DEAR SIR,—Your journal being the organ of the C. M. B. A. in this province may I crave space for a few remarks on a matter which in my opinion is of vital interest to that association. I allude to the present system of dealing with the applications of men desirous of joining our ranks and thereby securing their families against want and destitution should it please Almighty God to call the provider of such families away by death. Every honest, conscientious man, who is at all aware of the duty he owes his family, will fully appreciate and avail of the facilities here afforded him to make the necessary provision at the lowest possible rate. His parish priest recommends him as a practical Catholic and in every way fitted to become a member of our society. His application is presented to the association and read at a branch meeting, when if any member present can show cause why the applicant should not become a member, he is, according to our constitution, supposed to disclose the same to the board of trustees or state his objections openly before the meeting, as his discretion may dictate. The application is then referred to the board of trustees—a committee comprised of six of the most intelligent and responsible men in the branch—they, in accordance with their duty prescribed in the constitution, make due and diligent inquiry as to the applicant's moral and social condition and if the result of such investigation should prove favorable to the applicant, he is recommended by them for membership. This report is read to the branch at the next meeting and is accompanied by the certificate of the medical examiner, showing the applicant to be in good physical condition and a most desirable risk. A vote is taken for the purpose of admitting or rejecting this report and again affording opportunity for objection to the candidate on the part of any member present. Notwithstanding that the report is adopted unanimously, a secret ball ballot is then taken. What is this ballot for? It is for the purpose of ascertaining the number of members present who are secretly opposed to admitting the applicant to membership. There may be some who did not have the moral courage to openly state their objections, or secretly inform the trustees of them. Or if they have made a charge to the trustees, and that body has found such charges groundless, yet they are not satisfied. They will take advantage of the means here afforded them of secretly committing a wilful crime against a neighbor. If there be ten members present and qualified to vote should three of them vote unfavorably the candidate he is rejected, should there be twenty votes cast five of the number is sufficient to reject, and so on, as the number favorable to the candidate increases, the percentage necessary to secure his rejection decreases. In the face of the recommendation of the parish priest; in the face of the favorable report and recommendation of six of the most intelligent members of the branch, in the face of all that is necessary to prove the applicant to be in every way worthy to become a member, three or four men in a membership of eight or nine throw a vote for some malicious motive failed to take honorably objection to this man at any of the stages through which his application has passed, thereby affording a means of secretly depriving him of the means of livelihood, with which he sought to provide them. But it is said this never occurs unless the candidate is considered unworthy of a place amongst us. By what right do we adjudge this man unworthy? Let his past life be what it may; should he have been guilty of all the crimes in the calendar, he comes to us recommended by the highest authority: by those more competent to judge than we are. It is evident he has placed himself in good standing in the church: he is resolved to amend his life and take his place among men. Should he fail in this, should he abuse the confidence we have placed in him, we are at liberty to enforce the law of our association and expel him, but we have no right whatever to say to him: You are unworthy to join us; you would contaminate us and destroy our association, you have been guilty of crimes for which the church may see its way clear to forgive you and accept you within its fold, but it doesn't follow that we are supposed to do so. The fact is, one of us will say to him: You have incurred my enmity, and I will undertake to so prejudice the minds of two or three men of my own stamp against you that I will deprive you and your family of the benefits of this association and thus have my revenge. This is it in a nutshell. Out of every hundred men rejected through the instrumentality of the "black ball" from associations of this kind, ninety-nine of them are merely and simply the victims of a petty spleen and malice. It is a secret instrument of revenge in the hands of our most unthinking and dishonorable men, for no honest straight-forward man could knowingly be guilty of the commission of an act against his neighbor which may perhaps be the means of depriving his neighbor's innocent and helpless children of the necessities of life and leaving them paupers. There certainly should be some other means adopted of judging an applicant's merits. This system is not only a failure but it is a danger. A man is condemned secretly and without a tribunal, he is given no chance to plead for himself or disprove the charges against him if there be any. He is stabbed in the dark and the assassin is never known. Are such ignominious methods characteristic of us, or of our association? Is this consistent with our professional sense of honor and justice or in keeping with our Catholic faith and principles? If we come to give it a moment's consideration we will certainly find it is inasmuch then, as we condemn the existence of a system through which there is any possibility of so grave an injury and injustice being done a neighbor, we and each of us are responsible and are a party to the commission of one of the most cowardly and dastardly acts conceivable, as often as the "black ball" is used against a fellow man, which or any such society, which this we may be connected.