

The Western Churchman

A Journal devoted to the Interests of the Church of England in Manitoba and the West.

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PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.

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THE SETTLEMENT OF THE MANITOBA SCHOOL QUESTION

In our school days, we were wont to hear an old fable about a mountain, which was kept in the throes of labor for a long time, and then brought forth a mouse. We could not help being reminded of this when we read what has been called—*The Settlement of the Manitoba School Question*. For several years this question has been prominently before the public: upon it turned the issue of the last election to the House of Commons at Ottawa; it has threatened, on several occasions, to break up the Canadian Confederation; it has been the great bone of contention between the two leading political parties; and now it is said to be settled. But by whom? By the cabinet at Ottawa and the ministers of the Manitoba Legislature, without any reference to the Roman Catholic prelate, whose

diocese is to be effected by the settlement—without the slightest consultation with the minority who have made such a bold struggle for the spiritual education of their children. It seems quite evident that from the very start the Liberal government at Ottawa never mean to do other than they have done, and so we may well ask: "Why all this delay? Why keep the province in suspense, when this was all the concession to be made? Some people, who know no better, speak as if the Roman Catholic minority had got more than they had any reason to expect. The whole thing, as His Grace of St. Boniface has put it, is a miserable farce. The French Roman Catholics, who have been in this western country for many a day, and the Anglican churchmen, who for nearly as long have been doing a noble work for Manitoba and the Northwest, (both of these working at a time when no other Christian body was prepared to do anything for the province)—they have kept the country Christian; and now, forsooth, men of other creeds and men of no creed at all, step in and with an assurance which were worthy of a better cause, demand that the pioneers of Christianity in this great wild west, shall take just what they offer them, or do without. It is just like the self-conceit and self-righteousness of a certain class of people, who consider themselves qualified to set the whole world right by the narrow rules of their sect. We do not blame His Grace of St. Boniface if he does not publicly announce that the strife is just commencing. No earnest Roman Catholic could accept such a settlement, because it is not a settlement at all. It is not permission to teach their children the truths of their faith for half an hour or even an hour a day, that will satisfy the Roman Catholic minority; they want, and rightly so, to surround their children all day long and every day, with an atmosphere of religion; they want not merely to impress upon their young people's minds certain important dogmas, but to so fill them with a sense of the close relationship that ought to exist between these dogmas and the conduct of their everyday lives, that they will grow up Christian men and women.

Why cannot separate schools and public schools exist side by side as

they do in some of the eastern provinces, and in the old country? We think it quite within the scope of the government at Ottawa to demand that the teachers of separate schools shall undergo the same normal school training and pass the same standard of examinations in secular knowledge as do the teachers of the public schools. So far as secular education is concerned, we would have the Roman Catholic schools subject to the same inspection by government officials as takes place in the public schools. We would be quite prepared to insist, in Roman Catholic schools, on the same amount of time being devoted every day to the course of instruction prescribed by the education department of the Dominion. Further than this we would not go.

The Roman Catholic minority deserve far more than they have got in this so-called settlement, at the hands of the people of Canada; and, if this is not given now, a day will come, and that at no very distant date, when those in power will see the grievous mistake they have made in divorcing the religious and the purely secular in the education of the young. Aye, and more than that, the day will come when the Church of England in Canada, and other religious bodies as well, will find that the church day school is the only thing that will save the Dominion from moral declension. This is the experience of England at the present moment; and had the late Archbishop of Canterbury been spared a little longer, he would have made a great effort to obtain equal facilities for the carrying on of church day-schools as for the schools under the Board School System.

NEWS FROM WESTERN DIOCESES

DIOCESE OF RUPERTSLAND

Rural Deanery of Dufferin.

The semi-annual Sunday School Convention of the Rural Deanery of Dufferin was held in Morden on Tuesday and Wednesday, Nov. 10 and 11. The main subject of the first session was the formation of a Sunday School association in affiliation with the Church of England Sunday School In-