

NORTHWEST REVIEW

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Northwest Review.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17.

TERMS OF OUR SETTLEMENT.

THE CATHOLIC PLATFORM

- 1 Control of our schools.
- 2 Catholic school districts.
- 3 Catholic teachers, duly certificated, but trained in our own training schools as in England.
- 4 Catholic inspectors.
- 5 Catholic readers, our own text-books of history and descriptive geography, and full liberty to teach religion and comment on religious questions at any time during school hours.
- 6 Our share of school taxes and government grants, and exemption from taxation for other schools.

CURRENT COMMENT.

The Reserved Case.

We publish elsewhere a report, for the accuracy of which we can vouch, of His Grace's eloquent sermon last Sunday in the cathedral of St. Boniface. It will be noticed that the Archbishop solemnly reserves to his own adjudication in the tribunal of penance the case of those Catholics who vote (1) for anyone who approves the "Settlement," or (2) who is in favor of giving it a trial, or (3) who acknowledges as his leaders in this matter the men who wish to impose this "Settlement" upon us. The gravity of such a declaration, especially at the approach of the Lenten season, ought to deter all true Catholics from casting their votes in support of so disastrous a compromise.

A Liberal Candidate for St. Boniface riding is attempting to elude the reservation by affirming that he does not approve the "Settlement," that he does not wish to give it a trial and that he condemns, and will condemn in the Provincial House, the 1890 school acts. Whatever may be the effect of his first two disclaimers, the third, at all events, does not sufficiently antagonize the third clause of the reserved case, since he does not distinctly separate himself on this school question from his Liberal leaders.

Principles Not Persons.

Whatever he may allege in defence of his candidature, he cannot change the obvious meaning of his attitude in the face of the whole country. However sincere may be his disclaimers, the general public will not believe them, but will apprehend only the broad fact that he is the recognized representative, hailed as such by the Tribune, of Messrs. Laurier and Greenway who seek to foist on us a dangerous makeshift. Thus, the case for the voter in St. Boniface riding is a very clear one. It is a question of principles not persons. Mr. S. A. D. Bertrand is an honorable man; but he represents a false and pernicious principle. Mr. Lauzon, on the other hand, represents the principle of Catholic schools, he stands for the cause of religion and justice. In the presence of such a conflict of principles, personal characteristics dwindle into insignificance and vanish into space. The enlightened conscience of every sincere Catholic cannot hesitate in the choice between the two candidates.

The St. Norbert Meeting.

The meeting at St. Norbert three days ago was a presage of what the result of the voting all over the riding will be next Saturday. St. Norbert will be recognized by our eastern readers as the bailiwick that immortalized itself by welcoming Mr. Tarte in an address replete with awkward quotations from Mr. Tarte's former exhortations to stand by the Catholic schools. The same healthy and ancient district now sets itself on record as having in one meeting so disgusted Mr. Brodeur, M. P. for Rouville, that he returned home yesterday, so squelched Mr. Prendergast that he is no longer wanted by the running candidate, and so unnerved the candidate himself that he henceforth carefully eschews all joint meetings. Mr. Lanzon speaks in a clear, manly, direct style and with great fluency and point both in English and French. The audience was certainly adverse to the Liberal interest, but the Tribune is mistaken in pretending that the noisy interrupters were tipsy. No drink-laden brains could have got off the remarkably clever hits with which the crowd so utterly routed their would-be deceivers. When the latter tried to catch them with the bait of a promised railway to St. Anne des Chenes, that railway which has been dangled in vain before the eager gaze of eastern Manitobans for the past ten years, the audience shouted they might keep their railway, what was wanted just now was, not rails, but Catholic schools.

OUR CASE AS PRESENTED IN ENGLAND.

The article, "Manitoba: Audi Alteram Partem" by a Catholic Canadian, which we reprint from the London "Tablet" of the 23rd ult., is a jaunty and weak effort to defend the bogus settlement. The Tablet's remarks thereon are judicious so far as they go, and would no doubt have been more exhaustive, had that dignified authority been in constant touch with the NORTHWEST REVIEW. But, though the Liverpool "Catholic Times," the London "Universe" and the Preston "Catholic News" find it serves their best interests to exchange with us, the exclusive "Tablet" has always declined to do so. This is, we believe, a mistaken economy. To be sure, there is no monetary equality between the forty pages of one of the best edited journals in the world and our small sheet; but we can afford to do without the "Tablet" because our sphere is local, while the great Catholic organ, as is proved by its present jejuneness on this subject, is crippled for want of our humble assistance, because it is referred to as a competent authority on all questions affecting the world-wide Church. On the other hand the London priest who writes the letter we reproduce after the Tablet's remarks,

shows himself incomparably better informed than the great editor, simply because, as he himself says—and his testimony is altogether unsolicited, even quite unexpected, for we do not even know who he is—he reads the NORTHWEST REVIEW regularly.

To return to the article by "A Catholic Canadian." Let us first note his avowals: The system that existed before 1890 "was perfectly fair to all parties, and recognized in a most practical way the right of every parent to have his children brought up in his own faith." When the Protestant majority "used its opportunity," "the Catholics were naturally, indignant." Then, observe his errors of fact. "Religious instruction may be given by a priest or other authorized person for an hour every afternoon." There never was question of one hour every afternoon; at most it is one half-hour, and we have shown in this paper that in most cases, owing to the similar rights of Protestants, even that half-hour would be granted only twice or at most three times a week. "Now," says the writer, "that is not an ideal system, but for a country in which Catholics are in a small and dwindling minority, should it not serve, at least, as the basis for further negotiations?" Waiving the absurd plea of possible further concessions from Mr. Greenway's government which has ever been inimical to Catholic interests, we deny that we are a 'dwindling' minority. Accepting, for the nonce, A Catholic Canadian's assertion that the Catholics in this province were only 20,000 in 1890, we can affirm, from the church records of our various parishes and missions, that we now number in this province, at the very least, 25,000, an increase of 25 per cent. in six years (for the figures were ascertained last year), whereas the general increase of the entire population of the Province during the same six years is less than ten per cent. We are, therefore, not a dwindling, but a numerically increasing minority. And the rate of our increase is likely to grow with the growth of our larger families, with the greater financial stability of our farmers, who are far less weighted with mortgages than are the majority of the less economical non-Catholic farmers of this province, and with the superior adaptability of the French Canadian to the local conditions of climate and tillage.

"A Catholic Canadian" has taken care to suppress that part of the Privy Council judgment which solemnly avers that we labor under a grievance that should be redressed, and that that grievance is the abolition of separate schools. This is a clear case of the suppression of the truth.

The most egregious misrepresentation in this misleading article is the barefaced statement that the proposals made by the Commissioners last winter, "were less favorable to the minority than those now obtained by Mr. Laurier." Could the man that wrote these words ever have read the "Report of the Commissioners"? That he did not may shield his honesty, although it exposes his incompetency. The Report, p. 6, contains "Suggestions for Settlement of Manitoba school question from Dominion Commissioners," in which we read: "In towns and villages where there are resident, say, twenty-five Roman Catholic children of school age, and cities where there are, say, fifty such children, the board of trustees shall arrange that such children shall have a school house or school room for their own use, where they may be taught by a Roman Catholic teacher. . . . Provision shall be made by this legislation that schools wherein the majority of children are Catholics should be exempted from the requirements of the regulations as to religious exercises," which means that religion may be inculcated at any time. "That text-books be permitted in Catholic schools such as will not offend the religious views of the minority. . . . Catholics to have representation on the Advisory Board. Catholics to have

representation on the Board of Examiners appointed to examine teachers for certificates. It is also claimed that Catholics should have assistance in the maintenance of a Normal school for the education of their teachers." Despite the fact that these proposals were not accepted by the representatives of the minority, because they did not stipulate for Catholic trustees, Catholic school districts and Catholic inspectors, they were, nevertheless, far more favorable to that minority than the Laurier-Greenway settlement. This is evident from the reply signed by Messrs. Sifton and Cameron on behalf of the Manitoba government. We therein read (p. 8): "We regret that we are unable to accede to the terms of the proposition submitted to us. A study of its details reveals the fact that it involves much more than would appear at first sight. . . . It would establish a system of State supported separate schools for the Roman Catholic people, and would compel their support by the school taxes and legislative grants. Not only so, but the whole school organization—text-book regulations, constitution of advisory board, boards of examiners and normal school—would be modified to bring it into accord with the separation principle to an extent not usual even in places where regularly constituted separate school systems obtain." Thus Mr. Greenway's government recognized the proposals as a virtual re-establishment of the separate school system which, in the Laurier-Greenway settlement, has since been expressly excluded by the well known eighth clause: "No separation of the pupils by religious denominations shall take place during the secular school work." In their final reply (p. 23) Messrs. Sifton and Cameron repeat their chief objection to the proposals of Sir Donald Smith, Hon. A. Desjardins and Hon. A. R. Dickey in these words: "Your proposition aims at the legal recognition by the legislature of Manitoba of the right of the Roman Catholic people to separate for school purposes. Our proposition aims at removing every practical objection to the present system without giving a legal right to separate."

Another point in which the Greenway representatives recognized that the proposals were more favorable than what they have since granted is that, as they themselves indicate, "the organization of the separate school would be compulsory. Neither the Roman Catholic parents nor the school trustees would have any option. . . . The law would compel the separation without regard to the wishes of the parents or the trustees (p. 9)." On the contrary, in Mr. Laurier's settlement hardly anything is compulsory except the non-separateness of the schools. There are so many ifs and mayes in this document that it may easily everywhere be made inoperative. To parody a phrase we quoted above from Messrs. Sifton and Cameron, "a study of its details reveals the fact that it involves much less than would appear at first sight." The Commissioners' proposals seemed slight at the first blush, but were really important, requiring as they did, Catholic separate schools and Catholic text-books. The Laurier-Greenway settlement seems at first sight to concede something and, when studied, grants nothing; for religious instruction has always been allowable after school hours, and the teaching of French, as Archbishop Langevin pointed out in his sermon last Sunday, was expressly sanctioned by a government official inspector long before the "Settlement."

As an instance of the delusive appearance of superior generosity, take the second section of the second clause of the "Settlement": "Religious teaching to be conducted as hereinafter provided. . . . (2) If a petition be presented to the Board of School Trustees asking for religious teaching and signed by the parents or guardians of at least ten children attending the school in the case of a rural school district, or by the parents or guardians of at least

twenty-five children attending the school in a city, town or village." To a superficial observer this seems to grant more than the first proposal of the Commissioners: for the latter suggested twenty-five and fifty children where the former requires only ten and twenty-five respectively. But observe that the Commissioners speak of "children of school age," while the "Settlement" speaks of "children (actually) attending the school." Now in this province the average attendance, and this is evidently what is here meant, is only 50 per cent., and in rural districts it is much less. Therefore an average attendance of ten children in the rural districts supposes about twenty-five children of school age, and an average attendance of twenty-five children in cities, towns and villages supposes almost fifty children of school age. Moreover the Commissioners say: "The board of trustees shall arrange, etc." leaving nothing to haphazard. On the contrary, the "Settlement" requires the previous petitions of parents and guardians, an endless source of complications and obstacles to the operation of the permissive provisions.

These plain statements, taken in conjunction with the letter from "A Priest in London" and the Tablet's remarks, constitute, we venture to say, a complete refutation of an article which, by a curious coincidence, appeared in London about the time the Hon. Mr. Fitzpatrick was there.

INTERESTING SERVICES

AT ST. BONIFACE LAST SUNDAY.

Parting of the Ways.

St. Boniface cathedral was crowded on Sunday at high mass. There were two unusual attractions—the archbishop's expected sermon and Madame Albani's singing. These two features were in keeping with the double commemoration of the day, which was Septuagesima Sunday and also the feast of St. Valentine. The stern realities of the penitential season were exemplified in His Grace's sermon, while the great singer's spontaneous contribution to the music of the church might be considered her valentine to her dear Manitoba friends. Before giving out his text the Archbishop of St. Boniface said: "I wish to express the satisfaction, pleasure, and honor we have to-day in the presence of one of the queens of the musical world, one who is a favorite of our gracious Queen. I welcome her with all the cordiality of a fellow countryman and all the satisfaction of a Catholic bishop, who is proud to see his countrywoman preserving, amid the glories of the world, the old traditions of her faith and nationality. I thank her for her gracious amiability. May God grant that, after a long life of success and true merit, she may everlastingly sing with the angels the praises of God."

THE SERMON.

His Grace, speaking in French, from Prov. xxxi; 16, "With the fruit of her hands she hath planted a vineyard," said: "The Gospel of this day is the parable of the vineyard. What is most remarkable in that parable is that the last come are the first to be paid. This is a mystery not explainable by human standards, which remains in the secret of God's designs. He wished to make us understand that whosoever wills may save his soul, even if he come at the last hour of the day. I come this day to speak to you of a vineyard planted by the hands of my illustrious predecessors, Monseigneur Provencher and Monseigneur Tache, of gentle, firm, pious, sainted memory. The vineyard has been entrusted to me by Jesus Christ Himself, through His vicar upon earth. This vineyard comprises all those who belong to the Catholic church, within the limits of this diocese. Among the children of the family some need a more constant, a more paternal protection; I mean the little children, the beloved of the Lord. A special duty lies upon me to protect the Christian education of the children. Our school interests are in danger; they have been so for six years and the danger seems to be increasing now. I am about to speak frankly as one who looks only upon God and is responsible to no other man in the world than the Vicar of Christ. Some of our brethren are against us. Some children of the household are fighting against the church. You have heard the words I uttered from this pulpit at the time the settlement was made public. I denounced it to the whole country. My words, which some thought too severe, have since been solemnly approved by one who is rightfully considered the leader of the Canadian episcopate. He says: "No bishop is willing to approve, nor can approve of the so-called settlement of the Manitoba school question, which after all amounts to an unjustifiable surrender of the best established and most sacred rights of the Catholic minority. His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface immediately uttered an energetic protest against this settlement; in so doing he merely did his duty as pastor and followed the instructions of the holy see." (Archbishop Begin's letter to his clergy, Jan. 12th, 1897.)