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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1891.

Calendar for the Week.

Nov. 9—St. Theodore.
10—St. Andrew Avellino.
11—Patronage of Blessed Virgin.
12—St. Martin.
13—St. Didacus.
14—St. Stanislaus Kotska.
15—St. Gertrude.

The Government's Reply.

The Presbyterian Witness of Halifax prints the answer of the Manitoba Government to the petition of the Cardinal, Archbishops and Bishops, and comments upon it thus: "The ground taken by the Manitoba Government appears to us perfectly sound and unassailable."

Now the controversy is surely not so one-sided as that. Perhaps it will be as well to examine the reply, finding out, if we can, where its impregnable strength lies.

1. "These schools are maintained by rates and grants. They are non-sectarian public schools. The law makes no distinction between Catholics and Protestants or between denominations of any kind."

Very true. Quite true. This is an ingenious way of putting it. "The law makes no distinction between Catholics and Protestants." The law is not called upon to "make" distinctions. It is called upon to recognize the distinctions that exist and that will exist whatever the law makers may choose to do. It is precisely because the public schools are either Protestant from positive teaching, or Godless from negation that the Catholic cannot accept one or the other so long as he has the means to procure proper religious training for his children. It is because the government refuses to admit the distinction which has existed for the last seventy-five years that the Bishops complain.

2. It is true that Catholic people complain that they are not treated as they should be, but the ground of complaint has been properly stated."

Very kind of Mr. Greenway to keep the Bishops right. Still when they said that "believing in the necessity for religious instruction in the schools, they desire to have the privilege of conducting their own schools," they perhaps did not require his correction.

3. "Roman Catholic people demand that they shall be singled out from the rest of the community and that special class legislation shall be afforded to them as against all others."

This is the usual plausible method of assuming two things. First, that the majority is the state; second, that the state is the primary figure in society. Now society embraces the individual, the family, the state and the church. The central figure of them all is the individual. The first social group, the basis of organized society, is the family. Authority and responsibility begin in the family. The authority of a parent over his

child is admitted. The responsibility begins when the first dawn of reason breaks upon the child and never ends. Man is distinguished from the brute creation in his reason and free will. He is governed by the moral law, and religion is the law of morality. This law is beyond the province of the state. It has before now survived proscription and persecution. The Catholic refuses to regard his religion as a trifling incident. He regards as mere nonsense the assertion that a child can learn enough in an hour on Sunday to free him from the contamination of the other six days spent in an atmosphere false to the conceptions of his religion, whether because actively Protestant or merely negatively Godless. Morality depends upon the will, which therefore requires education as well as the intellect. Catholics believe that the unerring laws of God which govern in these matters are to be found only in the True Church. Others may dissent from this belief. But the fact that such others are the majority does not give them the moral right to prevent in the Catholic the exercise of that part of the practice of his religion, or to render that practice difficult by unjust modes of taxation and distribution.

4. "No citizen of the province has any justification in fact for claiming that he has not the same rights and the same privileges respecting education that any other citizen possesses. In addition to establishing the above principle in public schools legislation of and subsequent to 1890, it has been made the duty of every ratepayer to contribute to the support of the public schools."

When a privilege cannot in conscience be availed of, it ceases to be a privilege. Mr. Greenway's principle is therefore a false principle and he is welcome to the credit taken for establishing it. The last clause in view of its unjust operation would read with more truth thus "It has been exacted upon every ratepayer to contribute to the support of the public schools." The word "duty" which implies a moral equity is sadly out of place.

5. "The statement that Catholic people are compelled to pay for the education of Protestant children creates a false impression. The correct statement of fact is that all taxpayers contribute to the education of all children whose parents send them to public schools."

This is only half the statement of fact and so not correct. Catholics do this, and are also by a higher law obliged to support an additional set of schools.

6. "It has been made clear that there is no grievance, except it be the grievance that the legislature refuses to subsidize particular creeds out of public funds, and the legislature can hardly be held to be responsible for the fact that their refusal to violate what seems to be a sound and just principle of government creates in the words of the report, 'Dissatisfaction amongst Roman Catholics, not only in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, but likewise throughout Canada.'"

Here is another sentence made up of catch phrases: "Subsidize particular creeds" "out of public funds" "sound and just principle of government." That there is no grievance is the reverse of clear. That public funds are for the use of the majority when the minority cannot share in their use is not on the face of it a "sound and just principle of government." Inasmuch as Catholics are two-fifths of the population of the Dominion, continuance of the methods which had obtained for seventy-five years would seem to be sounder and more just policy than creating "Dissatisfaction amongst Roman Catholics,

not only in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, but likewise throughout Canada."

When they say that the law supports them in their power to make the objectionable laws, and that they will not amend them, the impregnability of their position becomes a matter for the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council to consider. But to assert that position did not require all the palaver that precedes it.

Eastern Re-union.

Political reasons which involve the conflicting interests of England and France in the East are supposed to have interfered somewhat with the success of the gathering at Rome meant to procure the re-union of the Greek schismatics with the Catholic Church. It is thought in Catholic circles that the action of the Sultan in forbidding the Armenian and Greco-Melchite Patriarchs from taking part in the conference is due to the hostile influence of England and the Triple Alliance.

However, Mgr. Azarian, the Patriarch who was thus prevented from attending in person sent to the Pope a document which contains an account of his views on the subject. Mgr. Jonsef, the Melchite Patriarch, perhaps the most influential of all the Eastern prelates is enthusiastic over the idea of union and declares that if there were priests, schools and churches, the union would be an accomplished fact. To this end there will be three new colleges founded for the education of priests at Corfu, Athens and Smyrna. This scheme of re-union is said to be one of the topics which most engages the attention of the Holy Father, and one which he wishes to have accomplished during his lifetime.

Bad Crops in Connaught.

Reliable information come from Ireland that much suffering, if not actual starvation, threatens the unfortunate tillers of the soil in Western Connaught this coming winter. Owing to inclement spring weather, the excess of moisture did not dry out of the soil at the usual time so that the potato crop was a month late in being planted. Then followed an unusually wet summer. As a natural sequence the blight made its appearance earlier than usual and when the tubers were little more than formed in the earth. A special representative of the Freeman's Journal went in person to the several districts mentioned in the reports of failure and bad crops in the West. Here is an extract from his correspondence dated October 20:

"I was struck by the air of almost hopeless dejection which was everywhere noticeable among the people. Most of those I saw were engaged in digging potatoes, and God help them, they had cause enough for dejection. The crop on which they mainly depend to feed themselves and their children, has turned out a complete failure, and as they turn over the soil and find beneath it only the wretched semblance of the crop for which their toil was expended, they may well be troubled and dejected. In scores of instances I examined the potatoes that were being dug, and in every case I found the same result—namely, that the crop was a total failure."

The London correspondent of the New York Times cables that he has been making a tour of south and west Ireland, and finds the harvest all

around the best for a decade. Even in the poorest and thinnest soils potatoes escaped any sign of discoloration or blight, and their yield is plentiful. Other root crops and general cereal crops almost uniformly tell the same welcome story. What object the London correspondent of the N. Y. Times may have in thus misrepresenting the state and condition of things in the west of Ireland may be guessed at. Poor crops mean distress and poverty, and, as a consequence no rents or possibly only half the rent for the landlord. Evictions follow close upon no rents or half rents. The London correspondent therefore prepares the American people for the prospective cablegrams of "Evictions in the west of Ireland;" "Organized robbery condoned by the priests," &c., &c.

Messrs. Balfour, Chamberlain and Unionists generally are for ever harping on the dishonesty of Irish tenants in refusing to pay impossible rents. The late Lord Palmerston exclaimed, "tenant right, landlord wrong." And so it is in the interests of landlords and coercionists that Ireland should be represented as abounding in wealth of crops and cattle when evictions are in the background. English sympathisers are thus secured for the extortionate landlord, and the starving tenant is condemned as a good-for-nothing, lazy miser, who hoards up his all and refuses to pay his honest debts.

No more apt illustration could be cited than the despatch of the London correspondent as above concerning the magnificent crops in the south and west of Ireland, together with the most convincing proof of the very contrary being the true state of affairs in that unhappy land.

The Freeman's correspondent continues:

"The landlords and their friends are pointing out that cattle are at a fair price and in good demand. This is but cold comfort or hope to men who have got no cattle to sell. In the wide district over which I was the scarcity of stock was a most marked and noticeable feature. In the space of a hundred square miles I don't believe I saw over a hundred head of cattle, and such stock as I did see was of the poorest class; so poor indeed that I doubt whether they would be saleable at a price that would even repay the cost of rearing. Where the rent is to come from is not then apparent, much less the money which in almost every case is due to the shopkeeper for the meal on which the tenant and his family subsisted during the summer months. The public bodies in the West have begun to realize the serious nature of the situation."

At their last meeting the Guardians of the Castlebar Union adopted a resolution pointing out the failure of the crop, the appearance of the blight, and the probability of a famine and called upon the landlords to abate the rents in all holdings of less than £15 value, such being too limited in extent to permit of raising stock.

In Washington the Catholic University authorities have arranged a series of public lectures in which Bishop Keane, Professor Shanahan, Rev. T. J. Donaty, Professor Spencer and Professor Gore are so far advertised to take part. The subjects announced are "The Two World Philosophers," "John Baptist de Rossi," "The first annual Father Mathew lecture," "Niagara Falls as a Time-piece," "The Building of the West Indian Continent," "Belgian Life and Activities." Such a series would be welcomed in Toronto.