

IS MANITOBA RIGHT ?

A Question of Ethics, Politics, Facts and Law.

In a state in which the form of government is autocratic, as in Russia at the present time, or aristocratic, as it was in England up till the beginning of the present century, the safety of the form of government does not demand a high average intelligence on the part of the masses. Indeed, in such cases the hold on power is much better secured to the autocrat or the ruling class by the existence of a low average of intelligence in the masses. In such states government is maintained and the laws of the country are framed largely with a view to protecting or increasing the privileges and power of the persons and classes who control the government and make the laws.

The function of the masses in countries governed in this way is to supply by their toil the material resources from which all the power and splendours of the rulers must be drawn, and to furnish by their arms and their blood the military strength necessary to realize the schemes of conquest and aggrandizement which these rulers may conceive, or to defend these rulers in their privileges and possessions from the attacks of foreign or domestic assailants. In such conditions government exists primarily for the benefit of the rulers, and any advantages beyond the means of subsistence which may accrue to the governed are merely incidental. All history shows that religion has been a powerful instrument in the hands of the privileged rulers, in assisting them to maintain their predominance. It has always been, and is at

the present time easy to persuade, by the manipulation of religious sanctions, men whose intellectual faculty is in a low state of development that they have duties to the powers that be, which cannot be neglected. It has been equally easy to induce them to overlook the fact that they have rights which are always correlative and commensurate with those duties. Hence, in communities where the intelligence of the common people is low, we have always autocratic or aristocratic government, and almost as invariably we see the civil and political power of the rulers buttressed by, or identified with some ecclesiastical organization, usually in the form of a state church.

There have been forces of various kinds at work, which have produced a constant spread of intelligence amongst the masses, notwithstanding the hostility, more or less pronounced, of the classes or individuals who have been accustomed to regard government, and its powers and privileges, as a hereditary right or perquisite. Simultaneously with the acquisition of knowledge by the masses, comes the demand on their part for a voice in the government. In these communities, where the people as a whole, are the most enlightened, the government is most democratic in form. Democracy is the inevitable outcome of enlightenment on the part of the people as a whole. It is a fact that no true democracy exists at present, or ever has existed. But this is simply because the highest degree of average intelligence