

AN IMPORTANT DOCUMENT.

CARDINAL GIBBONS TO THE POPE.

His Earnest Letter to the Sovereign Pontiff on the School Question
Written a Year Ago.

The following is a translation of a letter written in French by His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, to His Holiness Pope Leo XIII.:

Most Holy Father:—Mgr. O'Connell, Rector of the American College, writes that Your Holiness wishes me to make a detailed report of what was done at the meeting of the Archbishops of St. Louis, on the occasion of Mgr. Kenrick's Episcopal Jubilee, in reference to the schools at Faribault and Stillwater.

Your Holiness manifests such constant solicitude for our diocese, and such a skilled understanding of the situation of the Church in the United States, that I am always glad of the occasions which offer to give useful information to you; and I hope that what I shall say may enable you to comprehend fully the conduct of Mgr. Ireland in the matter of the two schools.

In beginning, your Holiness will permit me to recall to your mind the letter which I had the honor of sending to you last year on the subject of the address delivered at St. Paul by Archbishop Ireland before the School Commission, on the passionate attacks upon the address, and on the motives inspiring them. The schools at Faribault and Stillwater have been attacked with no less venom and passion, and for the same causes. Further, when we were met at St. Louis, it was the wish of all the Archbishops to obtain an explanation of what had been done; and, at my request, Mgr. Ireland made an explanation with a simplicity and frankness worthy of his high position and noble character. He went so far as to say that he was "happy to submit his action to the cognizance of his colleagues, and was ready to retrace his steps if they thought that he had passed the limits of right or prudence."

This is the agreement between Mgr. Ireland and the School Commissions of Faribault and of Stillwater, and this is what has been done:

I.—The school buildings remain the property of the parish. They are leased to the School Commissioners during the school hours only; that is, from 9 A.M. to 3 P.M. Outside of these hours they are at the sole disposal of the parish; the pastor and the Sisters who teach can hold in them such exercises as they deem proper. The lease is for one year only; at the end of the year the Archbishop may renew the lease or resume the exclusive control of the buildings.

II.—The teachers must hold diplomas from the State, and the progress of the pupils is determined, as to the various branches of profane learning, by periodical examinations held in conformity with official requirements. The class rooms have been furnished and are kept by the School Commission, and the Sisters are paid the same salaries as are paid to the ordinary teacher.

III.—During school hours the sisters give no religious instruction; but also members of a religious order, they wear their religious habits, and do not alter their teachings in any respect. The schools, although under control of the State, are, in respect of instruction, precisely what they were before the arrangement was made. The sisters teach the catechism after school hours in such a way that the pupils notice merely a change from one lesson to another; besides, at 8½ A.M.—before the regular school hour, that is—the children attend Mass, and on Sundays the school buildings are at the exclusive disposition of the parish.

IV.—The public schools are scattered in various parts of our cities, and children are required to attend the school in the district wherein they live. Faribault and Stillwater are excepted from this rule. Catholic children can attend the schools in question from all parts of the cities, and Protestant children living in the districts where our schools are situated may do so, but are not obliged to. The result is that almost all the children of the two cities come to these schools, where they are very few Protestants, and wherein the influence is almost wholly Catholic.

This, Holy Father, is in substance the situation at Faribault and Stillwater. After Mgr. Ireland's explanation and his

answers not one of the Archbishops offered a word of blame. Many were very explicit in their approval; and Mgr. Williams, Archbishop of Boston, whose authority with us is very great, did not hesitate to say that he congratulated his colleague on the results obtained, that his own wish would be to submit the school of his diocese to a similar arrangement, and that he hoped to succeed, at least as to some.

In fact, taking things as they are, the objections to this arrangement are none; the advantages are so great that the opposition raised by it is inexplicable unless it is attributed to malice or ignorance.

In Minnesota Catholic influence is already considerable, and it increases daily, especially to the prestige enjoyed by the Archbishop of St. Paul and to the active part which he takes in everything of interest to the country. The members of the School Commission are too sincere and honest, and, besides, too knowing and prudent, to try to introduce into the schools books which in any degree would be dangerous to the faith of the children; and if they should do so their schemes would be checked quickly. The Protestant children who attend the schools are too few to have any influence on the Catholics, and cannot prevent themselves from coming under the healthful influence of their surroundings.

In this contract which he has made with the State the Archbishop took great care to safeguard the future. It is but an essay which he has made in the hope of obtaining later advantages still more weighty, and, assuming an overwhelming Protestant opposition, or bad faith on the part of the School Commissioners, he can end the contract after a year and return to the system of purely parochial schools. There is then nothing to fear.

The advantages are many. The two schools, whether from the point of view of the number of scholars or from that of their resources, were decaying; to-day all reports show that they are prospering. They are well furnished and have all the conveniences of public schools—facts which are of great practical importance for both parents and children. The teachers are paid more highly than the parish could afford to pay them; the faithful have no longer to pay the double tax to the public school and the parochial school; and the pastors no longer have to worry to find the necessary money to carry on the schools—money often impossible to procure without recourse to means inconvenient for more than one reason, and sometimes gravely so. Furthermore, almost all the Catholic children of these two cities are now under a religious influence which either did not exist or the schools which they attended were Protestant.

In placing these two schools under the School Boards, which in our country are only local and municipal organizations, Mgr. Ireland did not intend to invalidate the principle of the parochial school, though he has been accused of so intending. His plan was to save two schools which were perishing, and to procure for a large number of children in Faribault and Stillwater the religious influence of which they were deprived in the public schools. When we think that more than half of our children attend the public schools, and in spite of all we can do will continue to attend them, we cannot refrain from praising Mgr. Ireland for what he has done and obtained.

For the rest, his interest in parochial schools is well known, and his opponents have only to consult the official statistics in the "Catholic Directory" to learn that his diocese, far from being backward, is in advance of many other dioceses. Parochial schools are numerous in it, and, out of a Catholic population of 155,000, they are attended by 11,700 children; that is, one child for every fourteen Catholics. In Baltimore the proportion is almost the same; in Boston the proportion is one child for nineteen Catholics; in New York, one for every twenty.

He has not even made an innovation. Many schools are under similar rules in several dioceses—for example, in New York, Milwaukee, Albany, Buffalo, Erie, Harrisburg, Peoria, Rochester and Savannah. In this last-named city all the Catholic schools are in the same condition and Mgr. Gross, Archbishop of Savannah, before his translation to the Archbishop of Oregon, did not hesitate to say at our meeting that he had always thanked himself for that state of things.

No one had dreamed of raising objections and of accusing the bishops and

priests of these dioceses of unfaithfulness to their mission and treason to the Church; but the passions were stirred up the instant Mgr. Ireland had acted. His enemies are bitter; it pains me much to say it, Holy Father, but they have watchmen at Rome, and will stop at nothing to ruin his prestige and his authority; and that, as I have written to you already, would be a great blow to the Church in the United States.

Your Holiness will allow me to say, in ending this letter, that the silence of the Holy See on this question has been, and will be interpreted as a virtual condemnation of the conduct and views of the great Archbishop of St. Paul. If this opinion had been shared by the American public, as it assuredly would be in time, I fear that the national sentiment would be excited, and that measures obnoxious to Catholics would be proposed in school matters. There have been attempts in this direction; they have been checked for the present, but it is important not to renew them in creating or maintaining prejudice against ourselves.

Further, most Holy Father, I dare beg Your Holiness to show to the American public in such a manner as you think best that Mgr. Ireland has your full confidence, and that you appreciate his efforts and his acts for the good of the Church in the United States.

It is with the most profound and most filial respect that I have the honor to be, most Holy Father, your Holiness's very humble servant and devoted son,

J. CARD. GIBBONS,
Archbishop of Baltimore.
BALTIMORE, March 1, 1892.

—Catholic Standard.

GLADSTONE'S BOYHOOD.

A short time ago Mr. Gladstone opened a workman's institute at Saltney, near Chester. One of the company made the remark to Mr. Gladstone that he had been recently speaking to a gentleman who knew him at the time when he was a boy at school.

"What was his name?" inquired the premier.

"I—of Liverpool," was the reply. "Indeed!" ejaculated Mr. Gladstone; "and did he tell you anything particular concerning our school days?"

"Yes sir; he said that he and you once fought and you thrashed him."

"Ah! I thought he would remember that; and did he tell you what it was we fought about?" eagerly inquired the veteran with apparent warmth.

"No sir, he did not," was the reply.

"Then I will tell you," said the grand old man, rising up with as much determination as if to enter on a debate. "He induced me to steal some strawberries from a field, and when I had done so he wanted to take the best of them. Now, when I had run all the risk of detection, I was determined not to let him have them, so we fought for them, and I thrashed him and I stuck to my strawberries."

"And when you see your friend again will you kindly remember me to him, and tell him that I do not know whether I could repeat the operation to-day, as I have not seen him for many years, and do not know the condition he is in? But I will mention this fact to you, that that field of strawberries was where Bold Street, Liverpool, now stands."

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It is beneficial for

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NOTICE

Is hereby given that an application will be made to the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada, at the next session thereof, for an Act to revive "An Act to incorporate the Equity Insurance Company," being Chapter 163 of 50 and 51 Victoria; and to amend the same by changing the name thereof to "The St. Lawrence Insurance Company."

Montreal, 10th January, 1891.

A. W. GRENIER,

Solicitor for Applicants.

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC, District of Montreal, No. 162.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT.

Dame Delima Marin, of the City and District of Montreal, wife of Adelard Lanthier, latter, has this day instituted an action en séparation de biens against her said husband.

Montreal, 7th February, 1891.

BEAUDIN & CARDINAL,

Attorneys for Plaintiff.

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC, DISTRICT

of Montreal, Superior Court, No. 127. Dame M. S. Josephine Brossent, of Montreal, authorized to enter in justice, Plaintiff, vs. Pierre Thomas Brossent, of Montreal, Defendant, and Octave Dumontet, of Laprairie, Tiers-Saisi. An action for separation as to property has been instituted.

Montreal, 29th January, 1891.

L. CONRAD PELLETIER,

Attorney for Plaintiff.

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC, DISTRICT

of Montreal, Superior Court, No. 162. Dame Anne Beauchamp, of Montreal, authorized to enter in justice, Plaintiff, vs. Adonias Bussereau, of Montreal, Confectioner, Defendant. An action for separation as to property has been instituted.

Montreal, 29th January, 1891.

L. CONRAD PELLETIER,

Attorney for Plaintiff.

F. KELLY,

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