

Northwest Review.

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CURRENT COMMENT

Referring to Dr. J. K. Barrett's letters to the daily papers, reproduced lately in these columns, one of our occasional correspondents writes: "The Doctor's letters in the Northwest Review were splendid. Say, Dr. Barrett is better than an LL.D. He is what we used to call in school a 'Jim Dandy'."

Mr. Ludwig Erk's trenchant letter on the Masonic ceremony at Melita was sent to this journal and also to the Tribune, Telegram, Nordwesten, and Germania, of this city, besides the Catholic Record, of London, and the Catholic Register, of Toronto. The Tribune promptly published it in its issue of the 10th inst., under the heading, "A Charge of Bigotry," and also inserted the following introductory letter from Mr. Erk:

To the Editor of The Tribune:

Sir,—In the spirit of fair play I believe you will not be afraid to publish the following correspondence from a German reader, and admirer of the independence of The Tribune. It has deteriorated lately, but it is felt the lapse will be of short duration. More than enough latitude has been permitted to one writer on The Tribune in publishing daily noxious and insulting doses to Catholics in the name of provincial rights. Those who preach and trumpet so loudly the provincial rights cry do so to conceal their practices of provincial wrongs. There have been many crimes committed in the name of liberty, and provincial rights appears to be another good name to cajole and juggle with in the West.

Of course the Tribune replies, with a studied moderation that shows how the onslaughts of its Catholic correspondents have chastened it, to the charge of bigotry in a plausible editorial. Its plea is that it calls for equal treatment and no special privileges for the "Hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church." It is too purblind to see that the public school system grants, at its best, special privileges to a spineless, shadowy apology for Christianity, bereft of the distinctive characteristics of Christ's teaching, and that at the worst—which is its constant tendency—the public school system grants special privileges to the absence of all religious influence, with the results so forcefully described by Judge Ryan on our editorial page.

After considerable delay the Tribune published, on Thursday of last week, Dr. Barrett's letter of the 29th ult., which we printed in our issue of last week. In the course of a long but lame editorial reply thereto, the Tribune concocted the following audacious fiction:

"It was not until 1852, when a Roman Catholic council was held in Baltimore, that the attitude of the bishops of Ontario changed. On their return from that council they demanded separate schools throughout the province as a 'conscientious necessity,' and also demanded that the textbooks in these schools be such as the bishops would select."

The historical fact is that the First Plenary Council of Baltimore being composed exclusively of United States Bishops, no Canadian bishop took part in it, just as no United States Bishop is present at any Canadian council of bishops. None of the bishops of Ontario—in 1852 there were only two, Toronto & Kingston—went to the Baltimore council, and therefore none returned therefrom.

The Tribune's historical fiction in this case, uttered with its usual cocksureness, shows how unreliable are its other quotations of laws purporting to have been passed in 1840 and 1843, but for which it refrains from that explicit reference so wisely demanded, though in vain, by Dr. Barrett.

What hypocrites these fellows are. They prate about equal treatment and they grant special privileges to Freemasons to lay the corner stone of public schools. Freemasonry is the incarnation of special privilege. It lives and moves and has its being in special privilege. Men become Masons because they think they cannot thrive on equal treatment, and because they long for special privileges. Not being able to stand on their own merits, they get a whole lot of irresponsible secret friends to bolster them up secretly.

The fact is, equal treatment in the administration of public affairs is a gigantic myth, exactly on a par with the first sentence of the American Declaration of Independence proclaiming that "all men are born equal." Everybody knows they are not equal in anything except the naked and obvious fact of their belonging to the human race. In everything else—physical and mental gifts, natural and acquired rights, they are as unequal as they can possibly be. No, the aim of human government, should be just treatment, varied to suit various circumstances, but never equal treatment. This justice implies fair treatment of minorities and respect for the convictions of the larger half of Christendom.

The Rev. R. G. MacBeth, into whose dense and silly pate no such conception of justice can penetrate, returns to the charge with a serene unconsciousness of the spanking meted out to his first letter by the quietly humorous Free Press. To that same journal, with thanks for its courtesy, the irrepressible "Roddie" contributes another letter which is, as might be expected, a farrago of false principles and imaginary facts. Two instances only, belonging to the latter category, are worth mentioning. He says that: "Protestants object to purely ecclesiastical schools on the ground that such schools are historically known to be failures from the educational standpoint." This is absurdly false. Whenever Catholic schools have a fair chance in competition with Protestant schools, the uniform experience of Canada, and in particular Manitoba, of the United States, of the United Kingdom, shows that Catholic pupils are the most successful. The other false statement of Roddie's, to which we refer, is this: "Historically the Presbyterian Church and the Church of England have claims in the west prior to the Roman Catholics." Have they? Let us see. If he alludes to the clergy, the first resident clergyman in the west was Father Provencher, who came here in 1818 and remained here till his death, as Bishop Provencher, in 1853. No Protestant clergyman appeared here till the Rev. Mr. West, of the Church of England, came in 1820. No Presbyterian clergyman ventured here till 1851. If he alludes to the laity the discoverers of the west in 1738 were Catholics, and from that time onward, for a century and a quarter, the majority of white men and half breeds in the west were Catholics. What, then, becomes of Roddie's imaginary claim?

Of that platitudinous letter the Free Press, in its issue of Oct. 6, says:

Mr. MacBeth returns to the attack in a letter on the school question which appears in this issue. But it is simply going round and round in a circle to declare that the Protestant idea of education—non-sectarian common schools—is the right one and that this would be a happier country if all parties would agree to support it. We agree unreservedly with Mr. MacBeth's theory; but it is a condition not a theory that has to be faced. That condition is that our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens refuse to agree with Mr. MacBeth; and they are too considerable a political factor to be ignored.

On the other hand, Dr. Barrett, with his breezy Irish humor, handles the ineffable Roddie in fine style. See his letter of October 4 to the Free Press. It begins with real Canadian

history, continues with a humorous "reductio ad absurdum," sets Roddie right on Magna Charta, and winds up with the enunciation of sound philosophical first principles. By the way Dr. Barrett himself is a splendid specimen of that Catholic training which Roddie, in his self complacent ignorance, brands as a failure. Confronted with his logic, his clarity and force of style, what a sorry figure Roderick Dearg cuts! Well might the red modern call upon his ancient black namesake, Roderick Dhu, in the words of Sir Walter Scott: "Where, where was Roderick then? One blast upon his bugle horn, 'Twere worth a thousand men." Roderick Dearg needs them badly.

Clerical News

His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface completed his round of summer visitations at Portage la Prairie last Sunday, where Father Viens received His Grace with that perfection of detail in liturgical functions for which the Pastor of St. Cuthbert's is so justly famous. On the previous evening, Saturday, Mr. Justice Ryan read the truly remarkable address which we reproduce on our editorial page. Mgr. Langevin warmly commended the sentiments so nobly expressed therein, and proceeded to enlarge with more than his customary eloquence upon the Catholic doctrines about education. On Sunday morning His Grace preached on the sacrament of confirmation and after High Mass, conferred this holy sacrament on 24 candidates. Some of these being Galicians, Father Boronie, Superior of the Brandon Redemptorists, who had come a few days before to prepare the Polish-speaking candidates, was present. At the evening service His Grace preached on Purgatory and prayers for the dead.

On October 4, at the Archbishop's palace, St. Boniface, before the Auxiliary Bishop of Montreal, Mgr. Racicot, and a concourse of high ecclesiastical dignitaries, the Archbishop made an announcement to the effect that the Pope had been pleased to confer upon the Very Rev. Father Dugas, parish priest of St. Boniface, and vicar-general of the diocese, the dignity of apostolical prothonotary. On the 27th of August the Pope named Vicar-General Dugas for this important office, but it was not until the Feast of St. Francis that the official appointment was made.

Monsignor F. A. Dugas, V.G., P.A., and parish priest of St. Boniface was born at St. Jacques L'Achigan, province of Quebec. He pursued his classical studies at L'Assomption, at which college after obtaining his degree, he taught, then became curate of Chambly, serving in that office for some time.

He proceeded west and was named director of St. Boniface College, and afterwards parish priest under the late Archbishop Tache. After spending four years in charge of the parish, he returned to his native province, and assumed pastoral charge of the parish of St. Andre D'Argenteuil. Upon the elevation of Mgr. Langevin to the see of St. Boniface, the Rev. Father Dugas was recalled and was appointed by him Vicar-General and parish priest. The Review heartily congratulates Monsignor Dugas on his well merited promotion.

MASONIC UNSECTARIANISM

To the Editor, North West Review

Dear Sir:

Here is the milestone the unsectarian schools of Manitoba have now reached, as witness the following report of laying the corner stone of the new public school in Melita published in the Morning Telegram of Winnipeg, Oct. 4, 1905.

CORNER STONE IS LAID AT MELITA

Masons Officiate at Founding of New School—Large Audience Attends Ceremony

"MELITA, Man., Oct. 3.—(Special) The ceremony of laying the corner stone of the new school here was performed today by J. A. Ovas, past grand

master, assisted by other grand lodge officers and brethren. After the stone was well and truly laid, the grand master made a very appropriate and instructive address on the occasion which drew such a large crowd together, and beautifully illustrated the symbolic significance of the ceremony, which was that of character building, which was the principal object in the life of every person who endeavored to leave some lasting monument of his being, of value to the world.

The choir, under the leadership of Miss Smith, received well deserved praise for the numerous selections. The trustee board presented the grand master with a silver trowel."

Done with the consent of the trustee board, as the after act of presenting the Grand Master Mason with a silver trowel goes to show. Well, what do the bigots of the Rev. MacBeth and McMillan stripe say? There is no religion in the act? There was only an address from the Grand Master Mason in which he orated on the principal object in life of every person being that of character building, and leaving some lasting monument of value to the world. People may conscientiously differ in what they consider of value to the world, but a Catholic is taught that his principal object in life is to know God, to love and serve him in this world, and that he must take more care of his soul than of his body, because in losing his soul he loses God and everlasting happiness. That is his faith. When will the bigots recognize the Catholic position? For Catholics to be expected to trust the spiritual lives of their children to teachers of such schools is practically impossible. To force them, as some would do, is tyranny in the truest and broadest meaning of the word, a tyranny that gloats over its power in its hands that compels the ratepayers to pay taxes for the support of Godless schools, and at the same time has no compunction in handing over the ceremonies attending the laying of a corner stone, to the auspices of a secret society of Free Masons.

This is the crop growing from the feed trough of the disgustingly coarse caricatures on the Catholic hierarchy, and the educational clause in the autonomy bill of the new Provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, so predominant in the pages of Toronto News, Winnipeg Telegram and Tribune.

LUDWIG ERK.

Gretna, Man., Oct. 9, 1905.

MR. MACBETH'S SCHOOL QUESTION

To the Editor of the Free Press:

Sir, My attention has been called to a letter in your issue of the 28th ult., in which the Rev. Mr. MacBeth of Paris, Ont., charges me with "mixing up facts, either wilfully or otherwise," when I stated that the province of Quebec granted separate schools to the Protestant minority. Here are his reasons for saying so:

"Dr. Barrett knows, or ought to know that the cases are not in any sense parallel. The Roman Catholic majority in Quebec established a system of ecclesiastical schools in that province and these schools have always been and are to-day under the control of the Roman Catholic Church. In the other provinces the Protestant majority established a non-sectarian system of national schools not controlled by the Church. If this non-sectarian system of national schools had existed in Quebec the Protestant minority would have accepted them, just as they have established them of their own accord in the other provinces."

Now, Sir, do the above reasons justify my reverend friend in the charge he makes against me? The Protestant minority asked for a system of schools separate from those of the majority. They got them in exactly the form in which they asked them. Had they asked for church schools they would have received them. I will go farther and say if the Protestant minority of to-day, through their representatives, spiritual and temporal, ask for distinctly church schools, the majority of Quebec

will grant them. But, Sir, they do not want them. And why? Because our separated brethren are divided into so many sects, each differing from the other as to the amount and quality of the religion to be taught in their schools. They, therefore, compromised upon what they call a "non-sectarian" system. This system may be called "non-sectarian" as between the parties immediately concerned, but it is, as far as Catholics are concerned, purely and simply a sectarian system. It is fragmentary in its methods, but distinctly Protestant in its atmosphere and in its ideals. It is not the fault of the majority in Quebec that the minority are divided into so many sects differing so widely in their opinions. We are not divided in our views as to what we want, and as we have first granted to our Protestant friends all they asked, surely they may allow us to enjoy what we ourselves want. One cannot help admiring the simplicity of heart of my reverend friend when he says: "If this non-sectarian system of national schools had existed in Quebec the Protestant minority would have accepted them just as they have established them of their own accord in the other provinces." Such magnanimity on the part of a Presbyterian divine should make those benighted French Canadian Catholics hide their heads in shame. Just think of it! If the Quebec majority only established a system of schools for themselves, which, while non-sectarian, as between the various Protestant sects, was purely Protestant as far as the majority are concerned, there would be the greatest satisfaction on the part of the minority to accept them. Who could withhold his admiration from the simple and yet ingenious Mr. MacBeth! I have, up to the present had a genuine respect for the broad spirit of toleration of the French Canadians in their treatment of minorities, but, alas! after this I must say that that spirit of toleration is not broad enough. They should go one step farther, and—well, become Presbyterians. If they would only do this what fine fellows they would be. There would be no school question and no "Papists." What a paradise Canada would be. But then, I am afraid, if the French Canadians would do this the language grievance would yet remain and they would find that the fable of "The Man and The Ass" would apply to them.

After exhausting his philosophical genius on the school question, Mr. MacBeth, with characteristic animus, turns on the floodgates of his historic lore on the doings of the Catholic Church and the Popes in the dim ages when they had not the enlightenment of Mr. MacBeth to guide and direct them. Catholics are charged with believing "that all governments and states should be subject to the Pope." No Catholic ever believed anything of the kind, nor does the Catholic Church propose any such belief for his acceptance. Mr. MacBeth instances the history of Britain as an evidence of this. In this he is most unhappy. The intelligent reader of Britain's history knows that the interference of the Popes in her affairs was the result of direct appeals of the people to him against the tyranny of King John and other treacherous monsters. The liberties we now enjoy were won for us by the resistance of the barons of Britain against the aggression of the kings. And those barons invited the assistance of the Popes in their struggles. Does Mr. MacBeth forget that the Magna Charta, that bulwark of Britain's liberty was won for us by the barons of England led on by an archbishop of the Catholic Church? It is the glory of the Popes and the Church that they stood firm in defence of the masses against the tyranny and oppression of kings and emperors.

Mr. MacBeth says that the Catholic conscience is of very little account and should not be taken into consideration by the state. I suppose he thinks with another Presbyterian divine, that the Catholic conscience "is mere perverted sentiment." He makes the broad statement that "the state has the right to fit the young for citizenship." Who conferred that right on the state? The state is an aggregation of