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Catholic Record.

London, Sat., June 28th, 1890.

MR. MERCIER AND THE EQUAL RIGHTERS.

It is only of late that French-Canadian politicians have taken any interest in their co-religionists of the Province of Ontario.

We have had for a long period of years to fight our own battles. Single-handed we had to grapple with insolent and aggressive Orangemen; single-handed Bishop De Charbonnel had to contend for Catholic education in the Province of Ontario.

In the eyes of the average French-Canadian politician Orangism was looked upon as a cause of mere family strife among the Irish, and Messrs. George E. Cartier, Cauchon and others had too much respect for Protestant prejudice to interfere in behalf of the Catholics of the sister Province.

Those gentlemen had to be denounced publicly from the altars as unworthy members of the Church before they could be brought to a recognition of their most obvious and clearly defined duties as Catholic statesmen.

Of late years, however, the prominent men of French Canada have come to consider that the interests of the Catholic Church in both Provinces are identical.

The Gaubord riots, and the Oka Indian outrages gave them to understand that Orangism is not a mere source of contention among the Irish. They found the enemy of social order and of Church discipline at their very doors.

Eated with the results of their audacity, the Orangemen attempted to trample on French-Canadian law and march through the Catholic city of Montreal piping their party tunes and slanting their banners of defiance and insult in the midst and in the very face of a Catholic population.

The climax was reached when not alone the Orangemen, but the Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist preachers of Ontario attempted to interfere with the very legislation of Quebec, and to have laws annulled because the Pope's name happened to appear in the preamble of certain Acts passed with a view to make restitution to a Catholic order for lands and hereditaments unjustly sequestered in years gone by.

Why Presbyterian and Methodist preachers should meddle with the legislation of a sister province and attempt disruption of confederation can only be explained by the apathy of French-Canadian Catholics in not asserting themselves years ago, and in not giving fanatics to understand, as Hon. Mr. Mercier has done lately, that the French-Canadians will brook no dictation at the hands of Orangemen, Equal Righters, or sensational lunatics in the Protestant pulpit.

The address of Hon. Honore Mercier, delivered to the Club National in Montreal on the 6th November last, exhibited in all its true and forbidding colors the injustice and bigotry of Protestant Ontario in resisting the Jesuit Estates Act and in clamoring against Catholic Separate schools.

Mr. Mercier proved from the admission of Protestants, high in authority, that in no country under the sun is a religious minority treated so generously as the Protestant minority in the Province of Quebec.

He detailed all the provisions made for the education of Protestant children and the large sums of money devoted every year by the Catholic Government of Quebec to the furtherance of Protestant education in colleges, academies and in normal and model schools.

Possibly his lecture, which appeared in pamphlet form and was widely distributed in Ontario previous to the late election, had the effect of opening the eyes of thousands of Protestants in this Province and of inclining them to aid by their votes the Mowat Government in its honest determination to help on the cause of Catholic education as provided by laws already existing in this Province.

The pamphlet, which is now before us, is by far the most important that has yet issued from the eloquent pen of the Quebec Premier.

It contains, 1st, letters which passed between him and Rev. Dr. Caven, Principal of Knox College in Toronto; 2nd, a letter from Mr. Sellar, editor of the Huntingdon Gleamer, on "Disabilities of Protestants in the Province of Quebec;" and, thirdly, a letter

by the Hon. Mr. Mercier, Prime Minister of the Province of Quebec.

In the correspondence between Mr. Mercier and Rev. Dr. Caven the latter is politely requested to give the name of the "Quebec loyalist" author of an important letter on "The Disabilities of Protestants in that Province."

Dr. Caven replies that he has not the writer's permission, but that he will forward Hon. Mr. Mercier's letter to him and await his reply.

Meanwhile the Rev. Dr. adds: "Permit me to say that the Equal Rights Association would much regret to endorse any statement which is not correct, and if it be shown to them that the assertions contained in this letter are false and unjust to the majority in Quebec, they will hasten to disclaim any responsibility implied in their relation to this pamphlet."

This letter is dated Toronto, March 7th, 1890, and signed, Wm. Caven. In a subsequent letter, dated 10th March, Rev. Dr. Caven informs the Prime Minister that he received a telegram from the author, saying "send my name to Mercier and demand that he prove his statement about my letter."

The writer is Robert Sellar, editor of the Huntingdon Gleamer, Quebec.

It may be remarked that the letter in question is incorporated in a manifesto issued by the Equal Rights Association, and forms the chief ground of complaint made by the fanatics of the harsh and unjust treatment Protestants have to endure from the Catholic Government of Quebec.

It would occupy too much space in our columns to publish the calumnious letter of Mr. Sellar, which Hon. Mr. Mercier prints in toto in the pamphlet just issued, so that no injustice would be done the writer.

We will merely summarize the forcible arguments by which the Quebec Premier disproves every statement of the man Sellar and exhibits him in his colors as an ignorant bigot and a defamer without conscience of the too-patient and too-generous Catholic population who tolerate the presence of such a pest in their midst.

Hon. Mr. Mercier, in his first letter, says: "Allow me to confess in all frankness that it does not surprise me to hear that Mr. Sellar is this so-called Quebec Loyalist. This gentleman is a rabid fanatic, who never misses an opportunity to show his hatred against everything which is French and Catholic, without the slightest respect which every honest and impartial man owes to truth. The small sheet which he publishes is not sufficient for his insatiable desire to represent under false colors everything that is dear to the majority of the population of the Province in which he lives, and he has hastened to send you his letter, delighted to avail himself of the influence and means of publication of your Association in order to spread more widely falsehoods and calumny concerning my fellow countrymen, their clergy and their religious institutions."

Hon. Mr. Mercier continues: "That if the writer were alone in this question he would not notice him, but as the Equal Rights Association has taken him up and adopted his letter, it gains sufficient importance to call for a reply. If after this refutation the association does not repudiate the letter of Mr. Sellar and persists in spreading it abroad, honorable people will be able to judge of the ways and means employed by you (Dr. Caven and Co.) to rouse the Protestant population of the other Provinces against eleven hundred thousand Catholics who inhabit the Province of Quebec, and who desire nothing more than to live at peace with their fellow-citizens of other races and creeds. You say in your letter that you would much regret to endorse any statement which is not strictly correct, and if it shows that the assertions contained in this letter are false and injurious to the majority in Quebec, you will hasten to disclaim any responsibility in relation to it. I accept this declaration, or rather engagement, and I forward you with this letter a demonstration which will put you under the obligation of fulfilling it."

(Signed) HONORE MERCIER, Prime Minister.

To Rev. W. Caven, President of the Equal Rights Association, Toronto, Ont.

All the foul misrepresentations and atrocious calumnies of Mr. Robert Sellar are then dealt with in lucid, convincing and cogent arguments. As Mr. Sellar's false charges are often heard, and as the pamphlet containing them is circulated broadcast by the Equal Rights Association, it is well that our readers should hear both sides, and have means of easy refutation at hand to silence the insolent clamors of those whose tottering institutions rest upon the sandy and shifting foundations of mendacity and misrepresentation of others.

HELIGOLAND.

England and Germany have made an agreement for the purpose of peacefully settling African claims of both countries, for mutual cession of territories.

Heligoland is to be ceded to Germany. Wita, and the Islands of Manda, Patta and Samal will be ceded to England, and a default boundary line is fixed between possessions of both countries in Africa.

Missions are to be granted freedom of religious teaching. The status quo will be preserved until the ratification of the agreement. The London journals regard the agreement very favorably. The Pall Mall Gazette denounces the surrender of Heligoland as shameful and abject, and as

most thoroughly Catholic counties of the Province there were large majorities against Mr. Mercier's candidates, though, of course, the result being, as it is, a decided victory for Mr. Mercier, it is to be expected that in other such counties there were large majorities for him.

Bagot, where the census of 1881 gives the number of Catholics at 20,817 to 382 Protestants, gave the Opposition candidate a majority of 200. Deux Montagnes, Montcalm, Nicolet and St. Maurice, also gave large Opposition majorities, ranging from 240 to 402, though there are scarcely any Protestants at all in those counties.

The number of non-Catholics of all kinds in these four counties in 1881 were 893, 898, 32 and 109 respectively.

Such facts show that the statements of the Mail on this subject are as misleading as they are mischievous. At the same time we have no doubt that some, perhaps many, voted for Mr. Mercier in order to mark their indignation against the fanatics of Ontario who have been so persistently threatening the people of Quebec with the invasion of their rights as British subjects.

The people of Quebec are human as are those of Ontario, and it would be a matter of surprise if they did not resent the abuse which has been poured out against them so profusely.

THE QUEBEC ELECTIONS.

Mr. Mercier has gained in Quebec a victory even more decisive than that of Mr. Mowat in Ontario. Out of seventy-three constituencies the Opposition have carried twenty-two seats. Two of the members are ranked as doubtful, it being supposed that one will be found on each side of the House. Forty-nine are supporters of the Administration. Thus it may be expected that Mr. Mercier will have a majority of twenty-seven, an increase of twelve. The election was keenly contested, as is usually the case, but there is no ground for the assertion of the anti-Catholic press of Ontario, and notably of the Mail, that the contest was decided as an expression of antagonism to Protestants.

Antagonism to Protestants or Protestantism formed no issue in the election at all. There is no party in the Province of Quebec entertaining the thought to deprive Protestants of any of their rights enjoyed under the Constitution of the Dominion, and Protestantism in Lower Canada would be equally secure from antagonistic legislation whether the Government were Reform or Conservative. We have no doubt, however, that the satisfactory settlement of the Jesuit estates claim contributed greatly towards Mr. Mercier's success. Quebec is so thoroughly Catholic, that the people could not but be disconcerted that a just claim should have been so long disregarded. Besides, the settlement of the question places the Province in a much better position financially, because it leaves the property in a condition in which it can be disposed of to advantage, which would not have been the case if a claim so just had still remained in abeyance; and it would appear that even the Protestant antagonists of the Province are now beginning to understand this, for at the Presbyterian General Assembly, held at Ottawa last week, Principal McVicar, presenting the committee on civil rights claimed credit for the Equal Rights Association because, as he said, the estates in question had been applied to the purpose for which they had been originally intended, through the Equal Rights agitation.

This is certainly a strange assertion, for that Act of the Legislature, whereby \$400,000 were apportioned for educational purposes, Protestant as well as Catholic, became law in spite of the agitators. The apportionment was in accordance with the original intention when the estates were acquired; but the Equal Righters aimed only at diverting the property from its original purpose. However, it is well that they are getting new light which enables them to see now the justice of the measure.

The Mail remarks that all the English constituencies went against Mr. Mercier. This is not the truth. Strictly speaking, indeed, there is not an English constituency in the Province, though there are a few where the English language predominates. In Stanstead those of English and Scotch origin together form a majority of the population, but that is the only constituency in which this is the case, and Stanstead returned an Independent member, who will probably support Mr. Mercier. The English constituencies of Quebec are therefore a mere myth—a creation of the Mail's vivid imagination.

But we presume that the Mail had in view those constituencies wherein there is a Protestant majority. There are only six such in the Province, namely: Stanstead, Huntingdon, Argenteuil, Brome, Compton, and Missisquoi. The four last named returned Conservatives, Stanstead an Independent, and Huntingdon a Reformer, Dr. Cameron.

The object of the Mail in making its statement is evidently to make it appear that the Equal Rights movement has had so much effect upon the Quebec Protestants that they consider they have been badly treated by the Mercier government, but the fact is they have only followed their usual political proclivities. The pretended Equal Righters have made no considerable impression upon the Protestants of Quebec, and the proof of this is that the Equal Righters did not dare to bring out candidates of their party.

That the Quebec elections were not contested on religious issues is further clear from the fact that in some of the

THE SYNODS.

The Canada Presbyterian says: "Two weeks ago Ontario was filled with political matters. Two or three Anglican Synods, three or four Methodist Conferences and one General Assembly are in full blast. Some of the discussions in the ecclesiastical parliaments are quite as sharp and tart as many of the political discussions were. There is abundant evidence that clergymen, elders, lay delegates and professors of theology are all human. Even bishops and general superintendents lay themselves open to the suspicion that they are not infallible. The balloting in some of the conferences and synods seems to be just as keen as it was at the polls on the 5th of June. Human nature is pretty much the same thing wherever you find it. The only difference is that in some cases it is a little more restrained and sanctified than in others. A really good man will act like a good man on the hustings or in the polling booth, and a man that is not good cannot be sanctified by the air of a church court. A fool will act like a fool in any surroundings. Our environment does not make our character."

Very true, indeed. But the churches that allow men to interpret the law of God as their fancy or passion or expediency may suggest must expect to have foolish things said and done even by those who are apparently the wisest, for we know that God makes use of the weak to confound the strong and of the foolish to confound the wise. For instance, Rev. Dr. McVicar, presenting the report on civil and religious liberty, read: "The committee beg to report that its members, scattered throughout the Dominion, have done much during the past year to foster a wholesome public sentiment on the question of equal rights." As this fostering of public opinion throughout the whole Dominion has resulted in the election of one Equal Righter, the member for East Durham, there does not appear on the surface of public events much for Dr. McVicar to go into ecstasies over.

The report goes on to say: "It is manifest that the aggressions of Ultramontanism have received at least a temporary check, and that the public mind is more thoroughly alive than it has been for a long time to the necessity of guarding vigilantly the legislation of the country and the education of our youth from the undue influence of Romanism." The Rev. Dr. McVicar must have a cheek of brass, or a very wretched memory, to bring into the Presbyterian Conference such an absurd report in the face of the Imperial snub given him and the Equal Righters by Lord Stanley at Quebec, and in the very smoke of the battle on Catholic education which has been just fought and won by Mr. Mowat and his Ultramontane supporters at almost every hustings in the Province of Ontario.

The report gives a summary of what the Presbyterian Church must bring about by all legitimate means:

1st. The complete separation of Church and State.

2nd. The abolition of all grants from the public exchequer for ecclesiastical or sectarian purposes.

3rd. The abolition of compulsory tithes and other ecclesiastical dues.

4th. Providing elementary education by the State, and while recognizing the propriety of giving instruction in the truths held in common by Christians, in no case shall money be raised by taxation to be devoted to the peculiar dogmas of any Church.

5th. The re-organization of the Council of Public Instruction in the Province of Quebec in such a manner as to secure the educational rights of the minority.

The first of these clauses is an utter impossibility, and where tried has been found wanting—the total separation of Church and State. Even the United States Congress is opened with prayer and chaplains are provided for the army and navy. Only downright infidels or very Liberal Catholics maintain such an absurd proposition, which has besides

received the condemnation of the Church.

The second proposition is a corollary of the first, and is equally incongruous, viz: that the State should not, by grants of land or otherwise, facilitate the spread of the gospel or the work of Christian missions or Christian education or charitable institutions in a Christian community. When Presbyterian or Methodist bodies receive similar benefits for church or educational purposes, they pocket the gift and "say no more about it."

The fourth clause formed the subject of a long and able discussion, in which Dr. Caven and Principal Grant took a very active part. Dr. Caven said: "He should never acquiesce in the Presbyterian Church more than the Catholic Church receiving public money for carrying on its distinctive work in any part of the Dominion."

The Rev. Dr. did not undertake to deny the report that he had obtained for Knox College land in Algoma valued at \$150,000. The report may be nothing but a canard after all, but it has been mentioned several times, and, until contradicted, we cannot believe in the sincerity of Dr. Caven's platform professions of self denial.

Rev. Dr. Grant: "Would not advocate the abolition of Separate schools in Ontario, because the great historic position of the Presbyterian Church was to see that education was not secular; that education should be religious in its tone, and if they could get Separate schools as they were established in Ontario, and not as they had been made, that was a good practical compromise on the question."

The Rev. Dr., we think, would be much puzzled were he asked to explain the difference or distinction between Separate schools "as established" and Separate schools as they "have been made." Dr. Grant very wisely advised further consideration and a postponement of the whole report till next year.

Principal Grant's suggestion was eagerly adopted, and further discussion of all the clauses of Rev. Dr. McVicar's report got the twelve months' hoist. A great probability exists that when another year steals round things will have changed and we shall have changed with them. Equal Righters with their sole representative in the Local House shall be left severely alone, and men's minds will have settled down to a conviction that unity and let live must prevail in this Dominion, or it will come to one mighty and speedy crash.

DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.

A stormy debate then arose as to the retention in office of Rev. Mr. Charbonnel. It appears that the latter-named clergyman is a brand saved from the burning, a convert from the Catholic Church. It appears also that after joining Presbyterianism, he was married. Erasmus said that conversions from Catholicism always ended like stage plays, in the face of a marriage. But Mr. Charbonnel's wife died, and, although St. Paul declares positively that only one wife is allowed to converts from Paganism who become priests, yet Rev. Mr. Charbonnel was determined to have wife No. 2, and wife No. 2 was no less a personage than the sister of his deceased wife. The most strictly pious in the Presbyterian body of ministers revolted against this flagrant violation of English law, and proposed the dismissal from office and emolument of this convert from Romanism. After a very warm debate on the subject at the Presbyterian Assembly of June, 1889, a committee was appointed to consider the matter and report on the subject the year following. At the synod held on last Wednesday in Toronto Rev. Mr. Campbell presented the report, in which it was stated that, although it is now the law of the Church to allow liberty of opinion in respect to marrying a deceased wife's sister, still the committee recommended, in view of all the circumstances of his case, the application of Rev. Mr. Charbonnel to be received into the full ministry of this Church be not granted. Hereupon Rev. Mr. Gregg protested that the report was out of order and unconstitutional. The Moderator ruled to the contrary. Principal Grant moved that the vote be now taken: "We have discussed this question year after year, and our time is now short." Dr. Gregg.—It is not fair to choke me off in this way.

Principal Grant.—You are choking yourself.

Rev. Dr. Sadwick.—Mr. Moderator does Principal Grant speak your views? The Moderator.—No, he does not.

Dr. Gregg then took the floor, and railed against the other side, led by Dr. Caven, and said Dr. Caven's views on this question were supported by German Rationalists and infidel theologians.

"Principal Grant took strong ground in favor of Mr. Charbonnel's application, and spoke of his sacrifices in becoming a Protestant, and they were told eight years ago what an acquisition he was to the Church. The Church could not afford to do a shabby thing."

Dr. Warden stated Mr. Charbonnel's age to be sixty-one, and not seventy as supposed. On this new light being

flushed on the subject, Rev. Dr. Campbell withdrew in disgust, and declined to be responsible for the recommendation of the committee.

Finally Rev. Dr. Sedgwick moved that the case of Mr. Charbonnel be laid on the table for another year. Dr. Warden seconded, and, Principal Grant absiding, it was carried unanimously.

Thus Rev. Mr. Charbonnel, who left the Church of his fathers to get a wife for the comfort of his old age, and after her death married the weeping sister, is allowed to go on from year to year in violation of English law and of public morality, earning the miserable wages of his apostasy, and, like Chiniqui, growing more desperate and more abandoned as he approaches nearer to the grave.

It is well worthy of remark that the two Principals of great colleges, Drs. Caven and Grant, are in favor of giving the poor old man a "chance" and not acting shabbily by him. He made great sacrifices in leaving the Catholic priesthood, and surely he ought to be allowed a little latitude in the matter of wives. Paul was rather hard on poor old men of sixty-one or seventy when he restricted the number to one. It was well for Paul he did not live in the days of Dr. Caven and Dr. Grant. But tempora mutantur.

ARCHDIOCESE OF TORONTO.

VISIT OF HIS GRACE ARCHBISHOP WALSH TO ST. CATHARINES—WARM RECEPTION—ADDRESS—FIRST COMMUNION—CONFIRMATION—VISIT TO CONVENT AND ST. NICHOLAS' SCHOOL.

Special to the CATHOLIC RECORD.

His Grace Archbishop Walsh reached St. Catharines on last Friday evening by the beautiful steamer Lakeide. He was met at the landing by the Very Rev. Dean Harris and his numerous flock, who extended to His Grace a most enthusiastic welcome. The following day, Saturday, His Grace visited Port Dalhousie and gave confirmation. On Sunday morning, in St. Catharines Church, the children made their first Communion, the boys wearing handsome black suits, rosettes, badges of the Sacred Heart, crosses suspended from the neck, and white ribbon on the arm. The girls as usual appeared in beautiful snow-white dresses and wearing on their heads pretty wreaths of flowers. The appearance of the young communicants was exceedingly fine and greatly admired. The singing of the De la Salle choir at this Mass was excellent, all the pieces being ably rendered. The choir was assisted by Mr. G. Purdy, who played the violin, and Mr. J. Waud, the cornet.

At the close of the High Mass, the Very Rev. Dean Harris announced that His Grace would then receive the address of the congregation. A number of gentlemen then came forward to the altar railing, and John McCowen, Esq., County Attorney, read a fine address, referring chiefly to the past well-known life of His Grace—his virtues, his zeal, the wonderful success that marked his whole career, both as priest and Bishop, and the universal joy felt at his being chosen to guide and direct the Church in the Archdiocese of Toronto.

His Grace made an eloquent and touching reply, heartily thanking the Very Rev. Pastor and congregation for the warm reception extended him and for the kind words of the beautiful address just read to him. He alluded with pleasure to the many recent recent improvements in the parish—their handsome church so artistically finished and pastor's fine residence, all showing a happy union of priest and people and a genuine Catholic spirit.

Confirmation was then administered, several converts being among the number that received the sacrament. His Grace gave the temporary pledges to the boys who were confirmed. They promised to abstain from all intoxicating drinks until the age of twenty-one.

In the afternoon His Grace visited St. Mary's Church and received a cordial welcome from the Rev. Father Allaine and his parishioners, and confirmation was administered.

On Monday morning His Grace visited the parish of Thorold, which is in charge of the Rev. Father Sullivan, and gave confirmation. The good people of this town made an enthusiastic demonstration of welcome to their Archbishop.

Returning the same day to St. Catharines, His Grace was given a delightful reception at the convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Many charming pieces were given. The singing was very sweet. Numerous floral offerings were made, some of which were very handsome and costly. A beautiful address was read in a very pleasing manner by one of the clever young ladies of the convent school. His Grace expressed himself as highly pleased with the fine singing he had heard and at the clever manner in which all acted their parts. He thanked the young ladies for their beautiful address, and also for the lovely flowers, the equal of which he hardly thought could be procured in his own city of Toronto.

THE ARCHBISHOP AT ST. MICHAEL'S SCHOOL—GRAND RECEPTION—ADDRESSES FROM PUPILS—FROM BRANCH 10, C. M. B. A.—FROM TRUSTEES.

In the evening a grand reception was tendered His Grace at St. Nicholas' school, in charge of the Christian Brothers. There were present with His Grace the Very Rev. Dean Harris, Rev. Father Kridler, Superior of the Carmelites, Niagara Falls; Rev. Fathers Allaine, Sullivan, and Smith. Decorations were profuse. In front of the building were streamers and a handsome arch. Inside, the large hall was tastefully decorated with banners, pictures, mottoes, bunting, and evergreen. No slight difficulty was experienced in providing seating accommodation for the vast assembly of ladies and gentlemen who poured into the house. The task, however, was accomplished as expeditiously as possible.

Upon the arrival of His Grace at the main entrance leading from the street, he was met by the school drill corps in full