

THE MANITOBA SCHOOL QUESTION.

To the Editor of THE TRUE WITNESS:

SIR,—In your leading article of March 6th, you criticize my letter on the above subject. Your humorous sarcasm over my name requires no reply. You say, "the word *Romanist* is considered as an insult both by the person to whom it is applied, and by the person applying it." As far as I am concerned, the last clause is not true. And the first clause is worse than fastidious, it is without foundation. Your Church in this country has been founded by an Italian Mission, having its head quarters in the City of Rome; and from thence your Church polity has been divided, and back to it you look as the supreme seat of ecclesiastical authority. It is therefore true to call it the Church of Rome, and its members Romanists, without meaning any offence, and therefore none should be taken. I find the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, writing to Cardinal Vaughan, Nov. 21st, 1894, calls it "the Holy Roman Church." I cannot seriously have erred, in following such an example; and I cannot honestly call any visible Church *a* or *the* Catholic Church. Dealing with my allusion to France you say: "Mr. Noble says that France was obliged to take education out of the hands of Romish ecclesiastics." Very well! And look at the result. Infidelity rampant, anarchy abroad, Atheism deified, Sacraments trampled upon, God despised, Luciferianism fostered, discontent in the social sphere, unrest in the political one, instability in the religious one, suicides multiplied, youthful depravity uncontrolled, prisons and asylums glutted, murder an every-day event, marriage ignored, illegitimacy tripled, divorces out of number, homes made desolate, fury, passion, and cupidity at the helm, revolutions rumbling under foot, and the name of God effaced from the statues of the land." Here is a dark catalogue of twenty two heads, which you ascribe to the taking of education out of the hands of Romish ecclesiastics. This is historically and logically impossible; for it was the debate in the French Parliament of 1879, which led to the issuing of the decrees directing the expulsion of these unauthorized Religious Orders, and the passing of the law of March 1880, "restoring to the State the complete control over higher public education," which transferred education from Romish ecclesiastics to the State. Therefore, I say, it is morally impossible, that the dark picture you have drawn of France's present condition could have been produced in 24 years. However dark France's present condition may be, Romish ecclesiastics are morally responsible for it, and you must not put the effect for the cause. The religious orders had done worse than failed to educate the French people. M. Ferry, during the debate of 1880, showed that there were in France 624,743 children between the ages of 6 and 13 years attending no school, and had received no instruction whatever. And in the Departments the case was worse: e.g., in the Department of Finisterre 47,000, or 46 per cent of the children between 6 and 13 years of age, were not inscribed on the rolls of any school. In the Haute-Loire, 19,000, or 43 per cent., and in the Haute-Vienne 18,000, or 48 per cent. M. Ferry pointed out that the annual conscription showed 15 per cent absolutely illiterate, and that the educational progress had been only 1 per cent during the past fifty years, which made him despair of any practical progress in the future. Then he made the following comparison: "In France, 15 per cent; in Prussia, 11 per cent; in Bavaria, 8 per cent; in Saxony, 1 per cent; in Hamburg and Bremen, 4 per cent; in Luxembourg, 2 per cent; in Switzerland, 7 per cent; in Sweden, Norway and Denmark, 3 per cent of the conscripts were illiterate. M. Ferry gave further statistics, showing that of the adult population of France above 20 years of age, no less than 57 per cent were illiterate. (Vide report in Journal Officiel, Dec. 21st 1880.) This proves ecclesiastical education a failure in France, and justifies the State in relieving them of that duty. In the course of the debate it was charged that the instruction in ecclesiastical schools was calculated to perpetuate ignorance, fanaticism and superstition. And M. Chalmet supported these charges by extracts from the Catechism de Perseverance, published by Mgr. Gaume, Apostolic Prothonotary, which had reached its 41st edition, and which he characterized

as an "outrage against sense, and of historical and geographical importance." This work taught that "the utility of the air was to carry odours, and to enable man to distinguish the quality of good and bad provisions;" "that the sun turns round the earth," and that "each day God marks out for the sun the point from which it must set out on its course, and that at which it must stop." (Vide Journal Officiel, Dec. 17, 18 and 24, 1880.) M. Lockroy, addressing the Chamber after a general condemnation of these schools, made the following statement about a school at Oursaille, near Tarbes, under the direction of the Sisters of St. Joseph, for girls between 15 and 18 years of age: "One of the pupils having been invited to read aloud the lesson of the day, in a work entitled *Christian Doctrine*," read out a description of Evil, "so immodest, that the Inspector demanded how such a work had obtained admission to the school, and was answered by the mistress, that it had been sent to them by their superior." (Vide Journal Officiel, Dec. 18, 1880.) He further stated, that though this immoral teaching had been denounced in the report of 1864, it was still continued in these schools.

M. Gambetta presided at an address on "Moral and Religious Teaching," given by M. Paul Bert, the *Savant* and deputy. (See Paris correspondent's report in the London Times, August 28th, 1881.) He made citations showing how the medals of a certain Saint were represented as "a charm to cure the phylloxera, counteract sorcery, pass school examinations, and make a stubborn horse gallop." He also produced a passage from a school book applauding the massacre of the Albigenses, and the Huguenots. He summed up these extracts by defining religious teaching, "as imbecility, fanaticism, anti-patriotism, and immorality." The Weekly Register, Sept. 3rd, 1881, denounces the address of M. Paul Bert, as "an onslaught on Christianity." The *Siecle*, in reply to the clerical papers says: "The citations given by M. Bert are extracted, word for word, from works of which he gives the titles, which are found printed in the official catalogues under the heading, 'Teaching of Religious Morality,' and he cited irrefutable examples: e.g. 'At Sainte Foix, in the Gironde, a teacher, a member of the Religious Orders, gave the children as an exercise the following subject: 'What personage is there in history for whom you have the greatest antipathy? Say what you know about him, and point out the motives of your repugnance.' 'Who do you think?' said M. Bert—'did these children of the Monastic Schools unanimously make choice of?' 'It was Henry IV.' The Inspector was embarrassed for a moment. . . But there was one more sincere than the rest, and who dared to write, 'I hate Henry IV. because he granted the edict of Nantes to the Protestants.' But M. Bert further related, that at the Universal Exhibition, in 1878, the Brothers of Christian Doctrine had exhibited many specimens of their writings, amongst which he found the following instructions: 'Greatness of Country.' When our armies under an invincible chief went everywhere to spread terror and fright, &c., . . . then the country was great.' When, to the cry, God wishes it, 90,000 warriors assembled in tumultuous masses to exterminate the Saracens, then the country was great.' During the ages, also, when the country was able to stop the secret plots of the ridiculous sects who menaced society, the fires were raised at all points of the country, to burn these false thinkers who dissented from our holy religion.' Charles IX. and the great Catherine de Medici will ever be endeared to the heart of the true Christian by their courage and their heroic faith. In one single night the country was delivered from 50,000 Huguenots.' (Le *Siecle*, Sept 1st, 1881.) This massacre of St. Bartholomew's day, 1572, and the dragonnades which followed, murdered or drove from France her best sons and daughters. And under the iron yoke of a foreign priesthood, ignorance, taxation, and oppression, civil and ecclesiastical, prevailed, till they became intolerable. And the encyclopaedists—Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, D'Alembert, and others—woke France from a terrible nightmare, and in that dim twilight she rushed into the horrors of the French Revolution of 1789. The Romish priesthood are morally responsible for that revolution and its consequences. They nursed the men who, in their hope-

lessness and disgust, have taken education out of their hands; and for the civil, social, and religious condition of France to-day, they are morally responsible. It is Romanism, not Protestantism, which has made infidels of the French, the Italians, and the Spaniards. We have seen in France that these foreign ecclesiastics are anti-national and anti-Protestant in their teaching. And now it remains to show that they are the same in Canada, and thus meet your challenge:

"Come, sir; no more of this declamation without evidence! Take each Catholic series of school books, including readers, histories, geographies, &c., and quote one line in which history is falsified; or which hatred and sedition against England is taught." At the London Health Exhibition of 1884, the Christian Brothers exhibited and sold their books, on the front leaf of which appeared: "Entered according to Act of the Parliament of Canada, at the office of the Minister of Agriculture." A few extracts will show the anti-English, anti-Protestant tone of these books, and answer your challenge under this head. The Fourth Reading Book contains a series of articles under the title, "Exiles of Erin," calculated to rouse rebellion against England and Protestantism: "First, the Irish are a warrior and war like race, and ever ready to resent an injury." And secondly, "That it has ever been the fate of Ireland, that a large portion of her people should be constantly driven from her shore." Then the writer adds: "Of the same stock and the same blood, as the great Celtic nation of France, to whom, in weal and woe, the heart of Ireland has always throbbed sympathetically." Thus to France, not England, she looks sympathetically, and for sympathy. Then after deploring the defeat of France by Germany, and comparing it to her own cold-blooded neighbours, he says: "For the last eleven hundred years Ireland has been fighting—war, war, incessant war—war with the Dane for three hundred years; war with the Saxon for eight hundred years." Then he proceeds to extol the several insurrections in Ireland, and states: "Among many other risings, Ireland arose almost as a nation in 1641." And there is much praise and laudation of the achievements of the Irish in this rebellion, when the Irish Protestants of Ulster were butchered in cold blood to the number of "154,000, as is acknowledged by the priests appointed to collect the numbers—The Lords Justices and Council to the King, March 16th, 1643 (See *Hibernia Anglicana*, Appendix p. 4.) "Sir John Temple considers, that 150,000 perished in two months, and 300,000 in two years." This is not only anti-English and anti-Protestant, but anti-Christian, and inhuman. And yet such is the teaching of these Christian Brothers in Canada. We ask no revenge for these terrible crimes. And to subsidize the calenders of such crimes would be a national crime, and a sin against humanity. These Christian Brothers, in their Reading Lessons, next take up the Revolution of 1688, and suggest the probable results, "if King James II. had been a braver man;" but they deplore the fact, that King James "was too fond of taking out his handkerchief, and putting it to his eyes, and crying out to the Irish soldiers, don't be too hard on them; O, spare my English subjects." Subsequently the writer condemns the Union in strong language, saying: "By the Act of Union, a debased, corrupt, and perjured Protestant Parliament declared in the eyes of the world, that Irishmen did not know how to make laws for themselves." Referring to the unhappy death of Castlereagh, the writer sneers at it as "a tremendous inconvenience," but adds, "the act that was too inconvenient for Castlereagh was a great blessing to Ireland, and to the whole world; for it is a great blessing to this world, when a scoundrel makes his bow and goes away." Coming down to our own times, the writer appeals to Irishmen in America to maintain "the glory of their faith, and of their national honour, that has never bowed itself down to acknowledge itself a slave"—to maintain "the glory of the battle that has been so long fought and is not yet closed;" and he adds, "the day will dawn, when, returning to visit the land from which we came, we shall land upon a free, a glorious, and unfettered nation." Thus they try to excite rebellion, and inspire hopes of dismembering the Empire. Again, in an article on O'Connell, they say: "After the fatal catastrophe of 1798, Ireland, cloven down, expiring under the

feet of England, who crushed her without mercy, believed that henceforward she would renounce all hope of obtaining by arms the blessings for the conquest of which she had so fatally revolted. Then he speaks of the result of "complete emancipation, and, after having thus disciplined Ireland, could one day present her to England as a nation constitutionally insurgent." Much more might be added in the same strain, but enough has been quoted, to justify what I said in my letter to the Witness:—That these ecclesiastics teach sedition against England, and hatred of Protestantism. And much more might be quoted, in which "hatred and sedition against England is taught." And I have also shown above, that not only in Canada, and against England, are these things taught; but in France hatred and sedition were taught, with other immoralities, which led to education being taken out of the hands of these orders. If you desire to form an honest and intelligent opinion, on the value of ecclesiastical education, read the debates in the French Parliament on the education question in 1880, from which most of my quotations are taken, and I have not quoted the most of the quotations and statements, then given and made, by eminent French statesmen. And also read Emile de Laveleye's work, entitled "Protestantism and Catholicism in their bearing upon the liberty and prosperity of nations." He was an eminent Belgian professor, and deals with present day facts floating on the surface of European nations. I write as a lover of mankind, but frankly and regretfully confess that that love compels me to hate Rome's ecclesiastical system and methods, which have proved so injurious to mankind in the past and present. With her enormous endowment, what has she done for the intellectual, moral, and social well being of this Province? Increasing debt, oppressive taxation, and ecclesiastical tyranny over an uneducated people. Similar cause conspired to produce the French Revolution of 1789, and the reckless infidelity that characterized and succeeded it. Let the page of history speak and the voices of the living present be heard; and guided by these, let us "act in the living present, heart within and God o'erhead."

Yours, &c.,

W. T. NOBLE.

Quebec, March 23rd, 1895.

THE LAETARE MEDAL.

To the Editor of THE TRUE WITNESS:

SIR,—As one who has enjoyed the honor of an acquaintance, of many decades, with Mrs. James Sadlier, I was delighted to see, in last evening's Star, an account of the merited tribute paid to the lady whose name I mention with deepfelt sentiments of respect. No one, familiar with the amiable and gifted authoress of "Willy Burke," could fail to be inspired with feelings of heartfelt satisfaction with such a unique and public testimony, as the award of the "Laetare Medal" to the genial, but unassuming lady, whose social and literary career has imparted—as an elixir, an odor of sweetness—balmy sunshine, all along the path of her guileless footsteps through life.

I have enjoyed the privilege of association with the good and accomplished husband of this admirable woman; and to say that he was worthy of her, is the greatest tribute I could pay to his cherished memory.

I have known them in their happy home, as well as in the centre of their numerous friends and admirers, whilst later on, I learned to know the naturally gifted and accomplished children which blessed their happy union. It will be no surprise, therefore, to the readers of this feeble tribute, if I express my delight on the occasion of the award of the "Laetare Medal" to its worthy recipient. In closing my poor effort to do justice to the merits involved, I regret that I have not reached the true level of my theme. It is certain, however, that even the attempt, to honestly acknowledge the claims of the lady in question, is, to me, "a labor of love."

J. K.

Montreal, March 26, 1895.

The St. Patrick's Day souvenir issue of THE TRUE WITNESS, Montreal, was unquestionably one of the most beautiful newspaper productions of the decade.—*Philadelphia Catholic Times*.