

The undersigned appreciate the political advantages enjoyed by Canada and have no desire for any other regime, satisfied that there is, in the institutions of the country and in the spirit of justice and conciliation which prevails among its inhabitants, a remedy against what, just now, is the subject of their complaints. The Canadian constitution acknowledges equal rights for all citizens and for all classes of citizens. Therefore, Canadians should not be oppressed because they are Catholics.

10. The undersigned cannot shut their eyes to a fact closely connected with the history of their country : Catholic missionaries have not waited for the facilities and material advantages now offered by Canada, to bring thereto the light of Christian civilization. On the contrary, they were the first pioneers of the sacred cause and they sealed their missions with their blood. Without fear or hesitation they buried their existence among the most barbarous savages, whom they tamed and induced to peaceably hand over their own country to the Canadian authorities. The Catholic missionaries accomplished that noble task on the banks of the Saskatchewan and Red Rivers, as well as on those of the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa, and they did this, when, alongside of the crosses they planted, they fondly rested their gaze on the fleur de lis flag.

Everyone knows that the same missionaries, while their eyes were yet moist with the tears they naturally shed when they had to sever the ties by which their whole existence had hitherto been bound up, were as faithful to British dominion as they had been to the banner of the land of their origin. It is well known that it is largely due to the fidelity of Canadian Catholic apostles that England owes the quiet possession of the noble colony which France had planted on the St. Lawrence and its tributaries. What then happened among the inhabitants of La Nouvelle France was possible solely because its inhabitants were Catholics and because England had respected their religious convictions. The knowledge of what they allude to renders more incomprehensible to the undersigned the fact that the Catholics of Manitoba and of the North-west are badly treated because they are Catholics.

11. Catholics believe in the necessity of religious instruction in the schools. This conviction imposes upon them conscientious obligations, and these obligations give them rights of which they cannot be deprived. They cannot be satisfied by the saying : Others do not believe as you do, therefore you must change your convictions ; others are satisfied and even wish that their children should be brought up and educated in such a way, therefore, you Catholics, you cannot stand aside, or, if you do, do so at your own expense. Such an argument is neither fair nor just.

The undersigned, pastors of souls, are at one with their flocks in insisting on the rights they claim, and they are fully determined to preserve them in their integrity. There is in this a question of justice, of natural equity, of prudence and of social economy, closely connected with the fundamental interests of the country.

The Catholics, being under the obligation of educating their children according to their faith and the religious principles they profess, have, in our free country, the right of establishing their separate schools, and that right they must be allowed to exercise without being forced to the burden of double school taxes.

The undersigned also take the liberty to state, that the Federal Parliament has endowed the schools of Manitoba and of the North-west with a large domain in assigning to the support of such schools the eighteenth part of all public lands. Those lands are Canadian property, and how could the Federal Parliament consent to deprive the Catholics of these countries of their legitimate share in the profit derived from such lands simply because this class of citizens adheres to its religious convictions and wishes to comply with conscientious obligations ?

See Appendix D, "A Page of the History of the Schools of Manitoba," by Archbishop Taché.

12. The undersigned petitioners are fully aware that Manitoba and the North-west Territories were received into confederation after promises made to the first inhabitants of that vast country in the name and by the authority of Her Majesty. The immediate representative of our beloved Queen assured them that "respect and attention would be extended to the different religious persuasions and that, on their union with Canada, all their civil and religious rights and privileges would be respected." In the estima-