

OUR ENDLESS HERITAGE

A poem composed by one of the Fathers of St. Boniface College and recited, before the Archbishop, by Harold Conway.

From where the Great Lakes glitter in the Sun,
To where the snowy mountain-ridges run,
Boundless, unencumbered, unfettered, grand,
Sweeps the fair bosom of our virgin land.
The masterpiece of an Almighty hand
That stretched this palace-floor to be the home
Of an unnumbered nation yet to come
From out the loins of many peoples—
great
With the inheritance of growing state,
And an illimitable destiny,
A regal nation, boundless as the sea,
O let them come and may they soon arise
The unborn generations of the wise
And mighty, men, deep-minded and full-souled
Who, having first accomplished, shall behold
The lot high heaven hath fostered from all time
For this new tabernacle most sublime,
This home of homeless millions, and their race
For all oncoming ages, till the face
Of earth, regenerated, shall display
The stintless splendors of eternal day.
And as, inspired, the seer's prophetic eye
Dispels the darkness of futurity,
He sees revealed, beneath this cope of sky,
Another fairer mansion yet to be,
With its foundations in Eternity,
The House of Christ, that here must needs expand
To the infinitude of all the land,
And multiplying like proportions, tower
Beyond the scope of numbers, and endower
Christ's heirloom with its newest heritage;
O, sight majestic, from age to age
To view that heaven-sculptured temple rise,
Commensurate with the plains and with the skies,
Making anticipated praises ring
Within its living bourne to Christ the King.
This is the endless heritage of Christ
And His anointed ones who would enlist
All men within His fatherdom, who fire
The earth with the deep strength of their desire,
Who, placed upon the topmost plane of life,
Have wrought surpassingly, and 'mid the strife
And the hot combat of a mortal day,
Uphold a boon that shall not pass away;
So, in the endless corridors of Fame,
Innumerable lips shall speak their name
As we this night, and echoing, make reply:
"Their memory is blest and cannot die!"

FORGIVENESS OF SIN BY MAN

A Great Lecture by Father Phelan

Morning Telegram, Mar. 20.
St. Mary's Church was filled to overflowing last evening, the announcement that the Rev. Father Phelan, the eloquent Passionist father, who last spring conducted a mission in Winnipeg, would be the speaker for the evening, being responsible for the extra large gathering. Besides the regular attendants of St. Mary's there was a goodly sprinkling of non-Catholics in the congregation, and the eloquent discourse was followed with rapt attention by all, and those who had attended in the hope of hearing a masterly address were not in the least disappointed.
The reverend speaker took for his text I. St. John, 1-9: "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." In commencing Father Phelan announced that he intended to speak on the confessional, and felt sure he would be able to show conclusively that it was of Divine origin. This was the great stumbling block of the way of many non-Catholics. They could believe in most of the principal dogmas of the church, but this one—the remitting of sin by man—seemed beyond their comprehension. In view of this, he would prove beyond a doubt that to man was delegated the power to forgive sin. There were three things he would prove: First, that God could delegate to man the power to forgive sin; second, that He had done so, and third, those to whom He had delegated the power.

Delegates Power to Man

Speaking to the first, he drew a comparison between an earthly monarch and the Almighty. A ruler of the earth

could say to his representatives: "Go to yonder prison; there you will find a man condemned to death for high treason. Tell him I do not desire his death, and that if he will confess his guilt, ask forgiveness and promise in future not to repeat the offence, he may go free." Surely if an earthly ruler could do this, there was no good reason why the Creator of all could not do the same. Why could God not delegate to man what man could delegate to man? It were possible and reasonable that He should say to His ministers: "Go to yonder prison (or confessional) and there hear what the poor sinners will say to thee; and should they come and confess that they have sinned against Me, show sorrow for having done so, and promise in future not to repeat their offence, thou shalt forgive them in My name." This, then, disposed of the contention that God could not delegate to man the power to forgive sin.

As to the second question, the speaker was sure he could prove that this power had been delegated to man by the Almighty. In the gospel of St. John could be found the words: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins ye shall forgive shall be forgiven, and whose sins ye shall retain shall be retained." Could anyone wish for a more definite and clear statement? Christ Himself had set the example of forgiving sin when the man afflicted with the palsy was let down through the roof into the room where he was teaching. Seeing the great faith of the man, and being pleased at its manifestations, He said to him, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." At this, however, the multitude began to murmur and say, "Who is this man, that he can forgive sin?" This and to prove to them that He had the power to forgive sin, the Lord said: "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power to forgive sin, I say to this man, 'Take up thy bed and walk.'"

As to the third question, to whom was this power given, the speaker said the power to forgive sin was delegated to the apostles, but it was not intended that that power should cease when they left this world. It was intended that it should go down through all ages in direct succession through the ministers of the church, for had not Christ said: "I will remain with you even to the consummation of the world." To the rulers of nations and to their ministers certain powers were delegated, but these powers did not die with them; they were continued in direct succession. Who, then, were the men in direct succession to the apostles? Was it the men who, in the sixteenth century, one a king and the other a monk, had set up a religion of their own? Surely it could not be said that they were the ones in direct succession. The Church of Rome could name the successors of St. Peter one by one, give the date of their birth, death, etc. This line of succession had been carried down for fifteen hundred years before anyone had attempted to deny it or set up another. Surely, then, if there were any true succession, it must be found in the Church of Rome. There could be only one true succession and one true faith. To-day there could be found throughout the Christian world a great many different denominations, all claiming to be the right one. There could only be one that was right, and the rest must be wrong. Where, then, should one go to find the true one—the one that was right—if not to the one which had been handed down in direct succession from the apostles?

In conclusion, Father Phelan said he wished to speak of the necessity of complying with the commands of God in this respect. This was the only sure way in which forgiveness could be obtained. There were many who claimed that the confessional was a silly institution; others that it was a source of immorality. Those who had experienced the sense of relief after having been relieved of the burden of their sins in the confessional could testify as to the common sense of confessions. As to the latter, the speaker said it was claimed by some that a person could commit sin, go to confession and obtain forgiveness, and then go on sinning in the same way over again with the full assurance that all that was necessary was to go to confession, and all would be forgiven. Father Phelan said he wished to state most emphatically that any one who had such an idea was greatly mistaken. The man or woman who went to the confessional without true repentance of their sins, not only were not forgiven, even though the priest should give them absolution, but they heaped sacrifice upon themselves, and would leave the confessional in a worse state than when they entered it. Surely, then, this could be no incentive to immorality? Only Catholics knew how hard the confessional was, and it was not to be sup-

posed that they would use it for any other than its real purpose.
A masterly address was concluded by an expressed wish that Catholics should become thoroughly conversant with their own faith, so that should any of their separated brethren seek knowledge on the subject they would be able to give it intelligently.
During the evening the choir rendered several beautiful selections, the "O Salutaris" being especially well rendered.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD AND THE EDUCATIONAL QUESTION

To the Editor of the Free Press.

Sir—At page 170 of his "Memoirs of Sir John A. Macdonald," Mr. Pope says: "I have already shown what was Mr. Macdonald's position in regard to the question of separate schools. The following quotation from one of his speeches delivered about this time (1857) presents his views on the subject very clearly: 'I have called the attention of the people to the fact that the 19th clause of the Common School act became law long, long before I was in the government at all; so that the merit of it, or the blame of it, is not with me, but rests entirely with the Baldwin-La Fontaine administration, as it was brought in under the auspices of Mr. Baldwin particularly, that pure and honest man of whom I always love to speak, though we were opposed in politics. And if it be asked why we did not repeal it, I answer in the first place, that it is one thing to give a right or a franchise, and another thing to deprive people of it; and, in the second place, that we have the indisputable evidence of a disinterested witness—a man who cannot be suspected of any leaning towards popery—I mean Dr. Ryerson, a Protestant clergyman himself, at the head of the common school system—who states deliberately to the people of Canada, that the separate school clause does not retard the progress or the increase of common schools, but that, on the contrary, it 'widens the basis of the common school system.' If I thought that it injured that system, I must say that I would vote for its repeal to-morrow. You must remember also, that Lower Canada is decidedly a Roman Catholic country, that the Protestant population of Lower Canada is a small minority, and if Protestant schools were not allowed there our Protestant brethren in Lower Canada would be obliged to send their children to be educated by Roman Catholic teachers. I say that as a Protestant, I should not be willing to send my son to a Roman Catholic school, while I think a Roman Catholic should not be compelled to send his to a Protestant one. In discussing this subject, I have always found that when it is fairly laid before the people, they always by their applause signify their approbation of the consistent course of the government in regard to it.'"

Sir John A. Macdonald has been dead a few years and his successors now claim that his utterances are out of date. But Sir John made confederation, while the men who would now set up a new standard of Canadianism only succeeded in disrupting the powerful party which he had built, and since have even failed to make a creditable figure in opposition. A perusal of the above quotation shows that instead of being out of date, the principles enunciated apply most aptly to present circumstances in the West. Sir John makes the point, even as Catholics do to-day, that a right once granted as being founded on justice, should not be taken away, and to that principle he remained faithful until his dying day. He also points out that if a minority of the country is Protestant, there are districts where the Catholics are in the ascendant, so that the system which would coerce Catholics in one locality might be used as well to oppress Protestants in other localities. Is that not the situation in the Northwest? Indeed we have here not only groups of Protestants and of Catholics, but also of Mennonites, Doukhobors, Galicians, etc. Can Protestants view with indifference the possibility of finding themselves a minority in a district formed by such groups, and without the possibility of applying their school taxes towards the support of a school answering to their own ideal?
I note also that in his last sentence Sir John A. Macdonald directly endorses the contention of my previous letter, that wherever the case of separate schools has been fairly stated it has appealed to the sense of fairness of the Canadian people.
But another protest is raised against the legislation now before the Canadian parliament, on the ground that shackles are to be put on the new Provinces. It was not the Canadian idea that the provinces should be "free and sovereign states." The men who made

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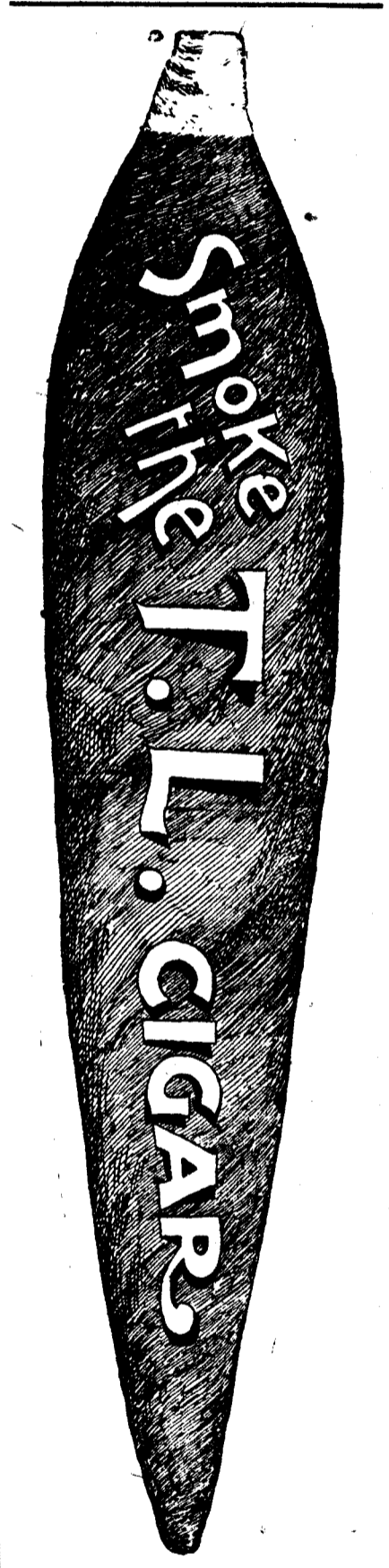
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confederation had before them the example of what it had cost the United States to put down the doctrine of "state sovereignty," and states' right to extend slavery. And it was resolved that in the Canadian constitution there should be provisions to prevent the provinces from committing injustice to minorities and disturbing the peace of the country. Those "shackles" were freely accepted by Ontario and Quebec, and surely what the pioneer provinces of the Dominion accepted cannot be contrary to the dignity of new provinces. The Territories have been "shackled" before these days. The Dominion government has since 1867 passed many laws to prevent crime and maintain peace in the west, and no law-abiding citizen has found that contrary to his dignity. By these acts of authority, we have been spared the vigilance committees, the lynching and the organized banditism that has afflicted other countries; we have been spared the dishonest political agitations of populism. It is not the Canadian ideal to allow heterogeneous aggregations of people attracted from all quarters of the globe by greed for lands and riches to indulge in unrestrained contests for power. The Canadian ideal is to protect by law the peace of the country and the rights of individuals, however few or weak they may be. That was the ideal of Sir John A. Macdonald and it meets present day needs.
CANADIAN.
Winnipeg, March 16

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