

The True Witness

AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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PATERNAL RIGHTS.

Under the heading "State Education," in a recent issue we laid the foundation of a powerful argument, by taking the ground that "State Education," as commonly understood, was contrary to the natural law. We have just received reports of a sermon and of an address delivered the following week, by Cardinal Vaughan, in both of which he most graphically carries out and illustrates our ideas and principles on this subject. Were it only to corroborate our statements and fortify our contentions we will give our readers a few remarks from these able and eloquent efforts of the great prelate. The occasion of the sermon was the celebration of the Jubilee of St. Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle, England. The full text will be found in the London Tablet of Saturday, September 1.

Speaking of God as the Father of Our Lord, as our Father, and consequently we His children, he asks, "What is a father? A father is one who has not only produced his child but has a knowledge, a personal knowledge, of the life, the character, the needs of that child; so with that tenderness in his heart he is guided in all his conduct towards that child by the rules of judgment and of knowledge, and by the dictates of affection." This expression in that admirable sermon is the key-note to all the efforts made of late by the Cardinal to inculcate the principle of paternal rights and to combat the ever increasing tendency to have the children taken from the parents and educated by the State. In the evening of the day upon which this sermon was preached a grand public reception was tendered his Eminence, and in his reply to the address presented he again dwelt upon this subject—a subject evidently uppermost in his mind.

We stated plainly, in our editorial of three weeks ago, that the process of State Education is contrary to the natural law; we felt that we then proved our contention beyond every possibility of refutation. However, some critics have declared to us that they cannot agree with any such argument. Cardinal Vaughan says: "There can be no duty more sacred, or more fundamental, written in the law of nature and confirmed by the law of grace, than the duty of parents to their children." If then the State—which represents the general public—takes steps to interfere between the parent and the child, and in any way to molest the former in the right of exercising that duty, it violates the law of nature as well as the law of grace. And as if this statement were not sufficiently strong, his Eminence continues thus—in that masterly reply:

"My next principle is that the law of nature asserting paternal rights must be

a guarantee of the State. Upon this I shall say a very few words. The State cannot violate the laws of nature without violating the laws of God, and God has given the parents rights for the education of their children which no human power has a right to interfere with. The parents train up sons to God; and after that, no doubt, they give subjects to the commonweal. The parents serve first the common God, and then they serve the commonweal. If the liberty of parents be not guaranteed by the State, there will be no liberty left for man upon earth. The English aphorism that the Englishman's home is his castle, means just this: that the parents have rights which no State can violate—that the home of the parent is sacred, that it is a castle, no matter how humble it may be. Now, my third principle is that any national system of education must be brought into harmony with the rights of the parents."

This is followed by a most interesting dialogue between a minister of the State and a parent, the former striving to show cause why the State should educate the child as it sees fit, and the latter setting forth in strong logic the responsibility that he feels as a parent to have the child educated otherwise than by the State. We may be told that these are the opinions of a Catholic Cardinal and of course they are tinged with his religious views. It is true; but the very fact of a man of such eminence, one whose talents have raised him, with the grace of God, to his grand station, one who has had ample opportunity of observing and studying the requirements of society and of men, thus expressing himself on such a vital question is, in itself, a guarantee of the soundness of the contention. But let us take the non-Catholic comments upon the attitude of the sage and learned churchman upon this question of education.

The Newcastle Daily Chronicle, an organ surely not to be suspected of any leaning toward Catholicity, in the course of a lengthy report says: "His (Cardinal Vaughan's) powerful plea for religion as the only safeguard of democracy—for the laws of God as the only appeal from the *vox populi*—and for religious education in the schools as the only guarantee for the shaping and lifting influence of religion upon the national life. The long address was most animated in its rhetoric and most resourceful in its dialectic, passing from half-humorous apologue to close argument of the great educational question, and rising from cogent exposition to passionate appeal." Mark the following—it comes after a long, careful and favorable synopsis of the address: "Hitherto we have supported the Cardinal's plea solely on the ground of its justice. It might, however, be defended upon what some may reckon the lower ground of expediency, and the still lower ground of economy, although, for our part, we have always been unable to see that an injustice was ever either expedient or cheap in the long run. Cardinal Vaughan asks for the restoration of at least the freedom to choose a religious education, and for the preservation, in its integrity, of parental responsibility in this respect. We do not suppose that the framers of the Education Act of 1870 intended to trench upon either. (Let the framers and supporters of our Manitoba Act of 1890 read the following): They meant well. But to any thoughtful person who imagines that, on the whole, we have been the gainers by the divorce of religion from education and by the slackening of the parental tie which, whether designed or not, have been the practical consequences of the Act, we would say 'Circumspice.' What will he see? We all remember the san-

guine vaticinations of the friends of that legislation. Have they been fulfilled? We see crime increasing at a greater ratio than the population. We find that the ranks of the criminal classes are recruited chiefly from the ranks of the young. The world is filled with cries of horror evoked by the proceedings of a set of mad dreamers who have persuaded themselves that a short cut to material happiness may be carved out by the dagger, or blasted out by the bomb; and when, by accident, the police stumble across one of these enthusiasts, we find that he is virtually a child. And as it is with political crime, so it is with crime of the ordinary description. A large proportion of the offenders are under what the law regards as the age of discretion. The explanation, deplorable as it may be, is simple. We have reared a generation with trained faculties, but with untrained morals. It cannot, assuredly, be expedient that this should be allowed to continue, nor can there be economy in encouraging its persistence. At any rate let the responsibility rest with the parent. If a parent chooses to have his child educated without his religious instruction, let him. But if, on the contrary, he seeks religious instruction for his offspring, let not the State bar his road to it."

We would like to have space to quote the Newcastle Daily Journal and the Newcastle Daily Leader, both non-Catholic, and both supporting Cardinal Vaughan and opposing State education as a menace to the world. But we will return again to our subject, for it is a burning question and one of unlimited capacity of development.

AGRICULTURAL FAIRS.

This is the season of exhibitions and fairs. It is true that these events are looked forward to as a harvest by the vendors of refreshments, the proprietors of games, the patent medicine men and all of that great army of exceptional money-makers that may be always found pitching tents upon the fair grounds and catering to or attracting the public. These, however, are only the natural hangers-on; but the grand and real object of the agricultural fair is something other than mere devices for gathering in the shekels. The public exhibition, including competition, is the only occasion upon which the mechanic, the stock-raiser and the farmer have an opportunity of displaying what they have produced and added to the country's wealth. Upon the aggregate result of the exhibitions, or fairs, may well be based the status of the country at large. For this reason do we look upon the ordinary country show-fair as of an importance equal to the grand central exhibition of any province. There may be less athletic sports and external attractions, but it is there that the farmer is able to show exactly what the wealth and importance of that particular district are.

We would be long sorry to see the day when the great central exhibition would absorb, and therefore, efface, the numerous county or township local fairs. It is well that the public should know the capabilities of each particular district. In fact the whole future of the country depends upon the fundamental basis of its agriculture. Neither city nor country is exempt from a dependence upon this universal branch. For years the staple product of Canada was the timber. Our immense and virgin forests presented a mass of incalculable wealth, that, being developed and used, went to build up our commerce and to unite us by its powerful links with the markets of the world. Thousands of our people have been employed in the woods cutting

down the pine and spruce. Thousands have found remunerative labor on our vast rivers and their tributaries, bringing down the timber to the mills or to the seaports. But, after all, to go back to the support of that wonderful industry, we find it in the agricultural prosperity and activity of the land. The horses required in the woods; the hay and oats to feed those horses; the pork, beef, potatoes, beans, flour, and all the provisions that are consumed by the army of laborers, all come from the farms.

Let the agricultural strength of the country die out, and with it must fall the lumber trade, the mining, the manufacturing, and every other industry. The city—with its wealth of business transactions—is entirely dependent on the farm. As it is in the lumber business, so is it in every other one.

This great truth being acknowledged, we at once see the importance of agriculture, and consequently of the encouragement of the farming population. And there is no better source of information for the consuming public, and of encouragement for the producing population than in the country fall fairs throughout the land. In theory Adam Smith and Riccardo have expatiated upon the subject; but in practice, we find the Catholic hierarchy of our Province establishing agricultural centers and missions that have for special object the teaching of the farmer, the development of the land and its resources, and the augmentation of the material as well as the spiritual prospects of that great body of suppliers. Few moves on the part of the Catholic clergy have been more noticeable than this one, and we find that our American confreres of the press have commented most favorably upon its importance. No other body, religious, political, or otherwise, has given a stronger evidence of a deep and practical interest in the country's well-being than the promoters of the agricultural missions of Quebec. We trust sincerely that the farmers throughout the Province will see the advisability, the necessity in fact, of co-operating in this movement. The result will be apparent each year in the increasing fairs held in the different districts, as well as in the improvement in the live-stock, in the vegetable, and the other exhibits. The success of the scheme will not only belong to the farmer and the general agriculturist, but it will be felt by the whole community, by the whole country, in all the ramifications of commerce and industry.

While anxious to see our country fairs increase in number and importance, we desire to ask our farming readers to join in the movement set on foot by our clergy and to show by their exertions how truly they appreciate the Church's solicitude for their happiness and prosperity, and how grateful they are to God for the multiplied blessings He ever bestows.

As an evidence of the incorrectness of despatches received and published by our general press, we take the following from the Ottawa Free Press of the tenth. It is marked special and comes from Winnipeg: "Governor McIntosh on Saturday prorogued the North-West Legislature. It is expected that the North-West general elections will be held in Quebec." If so there is little doubt as to the result of such elections. But would it not be just as sensible to say that the future Imperial general elections would be held in Canada? It may be an error in the transmission of the despatch, but, if not, it merely shows that either the receiver or the supervising editor are very careless. It is generally so in the case of those sensational pieces of news from Rome that gives us about as accurate an information as does the above.