

Erasmus Smith's Schools.

Rev. Father David Humphreys, O.C., after a thorough searching and examination of the original documents has discovered that for years, ay even for more than two centuries Catholic tenants, on several large estates in Ireland, have been systematically robbed of large sums of money bequeathed to them for the education of their children. All the tenants on the Smith-Barry Estates, Co. Tipperary, and the Lord Derby reservations in Limerick, besides those living in the Barony of Dunluce in the County of Antrim, and upon estates in the County Galway, were included in the last will and testament of Erasmus Smith, Alderman of the city of London, who came into possession of 50,000 statute acres of some of the best land in Ireland—under the Acts of Settlement and Explanation during the years 1660 and 1684. Before his demise Erasmus Smith divided his lands into three parts. He left one part to poor schools, irrespective of religious denomination; one part to the predecessors of the present Lord Derby; and the remainder to the predecessors of Mr. Smith-Barry of New Tipperary fame.

For 204 years the directors of these schools have been robbing the tenants' children of their birthright, and have been giving these endowments to others, who had no legal right whatever to such benefactions. In 1865 an Educational Endowment Act was passed, explaining and confirming the title of the tenants' children to these endowments as distinctly and clearly as an Act of Parliament could do so; and even yet, with the knowledge of their past illegality of procedure, the governors of Erasmus Smith board refuse to grant one cent of the large sums at their disposal towards the education, either primary or intermediate, of children of Catholic tenants, whom Father Humphreys proves most conclusively to be the heirs-at-law of Erasmus Smith, and the really intended recipients of his munificent endowments.

Home Rule government is expected to unearth a large number of similar injustices, and downright acts of robbery which the unsophisticated and terrorized Catholics in Ireland have been subjected to for the last two hundred years and more. Boards named by Government for the proper distribution of endowments and charities never considered that Catholics were included in bequests, in which there was no mention of religion, or that they were entitled to any part of the sums donated to them by conscientious Protestants who, in their last moments, sought peace for their souls by attempts (however late or inadequate) at restitution of ill-gotten goods.

The history of Erasmus Smith furnishes a striking illustration of the ethics, social and civil, that obtained in his day. He was an Alderman of the city of London who undertook, with other citizens, to equip and pay for an army of 5,000 foot and 1,000 cavalry for the suppression of rebellion in Ireland. Extensive estates and thousands of acres of the best land in that country were promised all those

who contributed largely to the war fund, and who were called Adventurers. The army equipped by Erasmus Smith & Co. never reached Ireland: it was marched off by Oliver Cromwell against the forces of Charles I., who was defeated and afterwards beheaded. Those who contributed were not forgotten, however. Erasmus Smith was appointed contractor of supplies in food and clothing to the fanatics and savage Gaspellers led by Cromwell to the Conquest of Ireland. After the siege of Drogheda, and the massacre in cold blood of its inhabitants, Smith obtained for his reward 21,700 acres in Tipperary, with 3,701 acres in Limerick; his portion in Galway, Antrim and other counties amounted to well nigh 50,000 acres of excellent pasture and tillage lands.

It is now established beyond all possibility of doubt that by letters patent and a charter granted in 1689 Erasmus Smith provided for the primary, intermediate and university education of the children of all tenants on his vast estates, as well as for the education of a certain number living within 20 miles of Galway, Limerick, or his estates in Antrim. No religious test whatever was required as a condition of acceptance, so that all children of Catholic tenants were as much entitled to their share of the endowment as Protestant children. Although a Board of Commissioners has at all times existed for the proper application of such provisions, no Catholic child has ever received any benefit from the proceeds of those funded estates. The Board Commissioners, of whom Vice-Chancellor Chatterton is chairman, try to get out of the difficulty by stating that the poorer classes have their National schools, and that intermediate and university education is of too high a character for bestowal on the children of poor tenants. But the people have to pay their taxes towards the fund that maintains the National schools; and when each district, as in Canada, and probably as under Home Rule, shall have to support its own schools, the Commissioners' argument must fall to the ground.

Father Humphreys has gone all over the districts named in the endowment charter, and has discovered a large number of tenants' sons receiving intermediate education, and several professional men who had passed through the University. On one estate, within an area of six miles, 135 boys were receiving intermediate education, and 259 professional men had passed through this University course. Not one of these had received a farthing's benefit from the provisions of Erasmus Smith endowment. Nor is it likely that the tenants on the Smith-Barry or Lord Derby estates shall ever profit by them, until a home government appoint an honest Board of Commissioners, who will meet out justice and fair play to all the children of the country, whether Protestant or Catholic.

The relation of such flagrant acts of injustice to the poor tenants, and of such persistent alienation of funds from their intended object, furnishes one of those incontrovertible arguments that crop up every hour, showing the absolute necessity of an Irish

Government seeing to its own internal interests and managing its own affairs, as well in the spiritual as in the temporal order.

French Schools.

Some years ago the Minister of Education appointed the Rev. Prof. Reynar, the Rev. D. D. McLeod and Mr. J. J. Tilley to inspect certain schools in the Province which were practically French schools. The report made by these gentlemen recommended the establishment of a special model school for the training of French teachers, the withdrawal of the unauthorized text books and the introduction of bi-lingual readers. Steps were immediately taken in order that these views might be carried out. The same gentlemen have again been sent out to see what progress has been made; their commission extending this time only to the schools of the counties of Prescott and Russell. The Plantagenet Model School occupies a prominent place in the report. The County and Township Councils granted \$1,000, and increased the yearly grant to \$800. All subjects in the curriculum are taught in English. The benefits arising from this school are not confined to the Eastern part of the Province, but it has supplied several teachers to other parts. The report quoted by the *Globe* shows great success in the character of the different schools and the progress made in English:

Out of the 56 schools visited in 1889, 17 were classified as very satisfactory, 21 as fair, and 18 "as schools in which the pupils knew very little English." Now the classification is: 30 as very satisfactory, 15 as fair and 11 as inferior.

In 1889 the whole number of classes in English reading books was 177; now there are 268 classes, an increase of 51 per cent. The increase in English text-books other than readers is still more marked, or from 23 in 1889 to 119 in 1893, an increase of 376 per cent.

The time given for teaching in English, which was two hours daily in 1889, is now three hours.

In 1889 there were 3,210 French children enrolled, and of these only 2,484 were learning English, while now there are 3,640 enrolled, and of these 3,581 are learning English. This shows a reduction in the number not learning English from 726 in 1889 to 59 at the present time. And the commissioners further state that nearly all of these 59 had attended school but a few weeks.

The Sunday Street Cars.

The memorable twenty-sixth of August has come and gone, and we are beaten, but not discouraged. With a vote of 18,128 against 14,101 which our opponents had, what great reason is there that we should be disheartened? In point of numbers it stands 48.15 per cent. for the cars, and 51.45 per cent. against them. But there is no use closing our eyes, or congratulating ourselves upon our moral victory—we have not yet reached the turn in the lane, though this second vote has shown that we are much nearer to it. The *World* deserves great credit for the plucky, hopeful fight it made for liberty and unselfishness; and although coveted triumph is not theirs, still, as it remarked in its issue of Monday, it is still young, and it may well rejoice in the growing life and strength which belongs to it. The day is not far distant when the pharisaism which now rejoices will bewail its defeat, and when the bigotry which armed the majority of our opponents in this

contest will haul down its black flag of persecution. The *World* is right when it says that: "The only reason that hundreds of people had for voting against the cars was because Archbishop Walsh had signed the petition to have the question voted on." With them it was not a question of moral right and wrong, or of public benefit or injury: it was simply that if Catholics wish the cars we will not have them. They did not reason or listen to protest. Knowledge of what a Sunday upon Christian principles should be they had none. Their theology was negative, and their bigotry the only positive quantity in their problem. Men reap as they sow; and the evil seed of religious persecution can never produce, on Canadian soil especially, anything but the worst of fruit. We close the question—into which our clerical opponents drove us more firmly than the merits of the case demanded.

In advocating Sunday Street Cars not only were we fighting for the greater liberty of the individual; we were fighting the bigotry and insolence of men who never appear in public print except to insult our prolates, priests and people. We were never very hopeful of success on last Saturday; the growth of the question seemed too forced and sudden. It is no use moralizing afterwards; but the arguments on the opposite side are so weak and contemptible that the friends of the Street Cars may well afford to bide their time, for they will be all the stronger. Until then we must be satisfied with pulling down the majority, and the knowledge that we are on the side of right, liberty and fair minded justice.

A New Prayer-Book.

We have received from the Monastery of the Precious Blood in this city a very neat little prayer-book written for the spread of devotion towards the Precious Blood. The title in the French copy is "The Manual of the Precious Blood, or The Book of the Elect." The English edition has unhappily suppressed the first—and the translation appears with the monopolizing title of *The Book of the Elect*. But this by no means detracts from the intrinsic value of the volume itself, filled as it is with a piety which expresses itself in extatic ejaculations and the most fervent prayers, and which has for its objects every act of religion from the Mass and the Sacraments to the ordinary duties of daily life. An example or two may be given. Two of the early chapters containing pointed scriptural quotations and useful advice on the sanctification of almsgiving and work are very practical. Many new features characterize this fervent Manual, which will be a holy guide to all who may feel an attraction towards that most constant source of all devotion and piety, The Precious Blood of Our Lord. It is for sale at the Convent of the Precious Blood, St. Joseph street, Toronto.

A despatch from London announces that Mr. Blake sails for Canada on Saturday. The Irish party Tuesday last gave him a farewell dinner. The *Pall-Mall Gazette* is accountable for the report that the Canadian statesman is not likely to represent South Longford in the next session.