

RELIGION IN SCHOOLS.

A VALUABLE PAPER BY ARCHBISHOP JANSSENS.

In all Civilized Countries Save Our Own
the Essentiality of Uniting Secular
and Religious Training is Recognized
—The Question is Treated Abroad
With Fairness.

The last official report of the Commissioner of Education (Government Printing Office, 1893), speaks at length on the systems of education in vogue in some European countries and gives food for reflection to the educators of our country, who, moved, we presume, by good intentions to avoid religious conflict, have excluded religion from the whole program of public education, from the primary up to the highest department. This system, excluding religion, is branded by some of its opponents as godless, which word (see Webster) has different meanings. We certainly would not call our system of public education godless in the sense of being "atheistical, ungodly, irreligious, wicked;" but we hesitate not to apply to its primary meaning "as having or acknowledging no God, without reference or regard for God." Religion, according to Webster, is "the recognition of God as an object of worship, love and obedience." The nature of this worship is explained to us by the revelations, doctrines and commands given by God himself, that so, as the Catechism teaches us, we may know him, love him, and serve him here in this world and be happy with him forever in the next.

Our system of public education completely excludes religion; it has no reference nor regard for God, nor to the doctrines and commands proclaimed by Him, and in this sense it deserves to be condemned as godless. On the contrary, in most European countries religion forms the very basis of public education. The Prussian Minister of Education convoked a conference of teachers in Berlin, December, 1890. Dr. Goring, the representative of the Association for School Reform, laid before the conference his scheme for a new German school "that has attracted no little attention." [All quotations, which follow, are taken from the government official report.]

The first article runs thus:

"The entire instructions must further independent thinking, must lead to a moral and religious culture, aid the development of character," etc. (p. 352.)

He explains what he means by religious culture in Art. 11:

"Religious instruction is to be regarded as the central point of all instruction. All the other branches are to be taught with reference to this one. In it is to be sought the material source of a more intense instruction."

See how he applies it to history in Art. 15:

"Instruction in history refers in turn to the religious instruction through the comparison of historical characters with religious characters. Especially is every action to be judged according to its moral and religious worth, after the standard of the life and works of Jesus. That will form firm fundamental ideas and will strengthen the religious and moral judgment."

Our Catholic schools would profit by taking note of this conception of history. He continues:

"Art. 16. The instruction in natural history and natural science is connected with religion by the demonstration of God as the Creator and Preserver of all. In the study of animals the sympathy for animals is to be awakened as a command of Christianity."

Dr. von Gossler, Minister of Education, in his opening address before the Emperor remarked (p. 357):

"Your Majesty has called our attention anew to the significance attached to the proper assimilation of religion."

And the Emperor himself at the close of the conference spoke thus (p. 388):

"I will, of course, hold it as my most sacred duty to provide for cherishing and increasing the religious sentiment and Christian spirit in the school. Let the school esteem and honor the Church, and let the Church on her side stand by the school, and help it forward with its work; then shall we together be in a position to fit the youth for the demands of our modern civic life."

The same Emperor by decrees allows the schoolmaster, who should be at the

same time organist of the parish church, to leave the school and to attend to his duties in church for a funeral; allows also the schoolmaster to send during class hours two or four altar boys to the church for the same purpose, should the pastor request it; and this in order to teach the youth reverence for the Church and for God. The reporter of the conference remarked (p. 396):

"There was an unmistakable conviction present in the minds of the members that the youth of the land were not receiving that religious grounding, were not going into life with the religious convictions they should have, therefore, there was a good deal of feeling that more ought to be done in way of religious instruction in the schools. Anything that looked toward an apparent lessening of the emphasis on religious instruction was strongly opposed, not only by the clergymen in the body, but also by a majority of the teachers. There was, of course, entire unanimity as to the necessity of retaining religion as a subject of study in the public schools; indeed, no one so much as suggested that any other course was possible."

The report of the Commissioner of Education shows that religion forms a notable part in public instruction in Prussia, Baden, Bavaria, Austria and Denmark. Of Norway it states (p. 511):

"The school is to be opened and closed with prayer, reading of psalms or singing; an eminently religious element is to be inculcated in all schools, the object being to give a Christian education."

The religious instruction in those countries is left to the control of the different religious bodies. In Belgium, Holland, England and Canada the public school system exists along with the denominational system, which is recognized and salaried by the Government, and which is opposed by no one, except by those who hate the Church or profess to believe that religion is altogether unnecessary and useless in the life of man.

It is unnecessary to repeat that Catholics are not opposed to public education, only to public education enforced without regard to their conscientious and religious convictions. In this they stand not alone; thousands of non-Catholic parents, who believe the soul worth more than this life, give a practical proof of their conviction by sending their children to private rather than public schools, and thousands of others would do the same were their means to permit it.

It is gratifying to see that the official report of the Commissioner of Education introduces the subject of religion in such a prominent manner regarding education abroad; and it is to be hoped that in future the subject may receive equal attention for the education at home. The difficulties of giving due prominence to religion in public education are imaginary, not real; they are exaggerated by popular religious prejudice and that childish dread of so-called "Romish aggression." Let the State look to the hygiene of school buildings, to the examination of teachers by unbiased and unprejudiced examiners, to the examination of scholars to know whether they come up to the proper standard of secular education; and leave the moral training of the child, the formation of character, the general school discipline, the infusion of religion in the various branches to the responsibility of the parents, who intrust their children to the care of religious schools. Thus the authority and rights of parents will be respected, religion will have free scope to make children better Christians and better citizens, the number of criminals will be lessened, and instruction by proper rivalry will be perfected. Nature has imposed on parents the right as well as the duty to educate their children according to their conscience, guided and directed by the dictates of religion. And so parents, who pay taxes and who are aware of the great responsibility they owe to God for the religious training of their children, have a right to demand that denominational schools be recognized and salaried by the State. The good common sense for justice and fairness of the American people would grant it, if only they could be made to see it in its true light.—*N. Y. Independent.*

FATAL RESULT OF DELAY.

Sickness generally follows in the path of neglect. Don't be reckless, but prudently take a few doses of Scott's Emulsion immediately following exposure to cold. It will save you many painful days and sleepless nights.

ST. LAMBERTS.

DINNER AND BAZAAR IN AID OF THE NEW CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Yesterday (Monday) evening the Bazaar in aid of the building fund of the new Catholic Church was formally and most successfully opened with a dinner in the Hall of the St. Lambert Boat Club. More than two hundred and fifty guests—many of them visitors, for whom a special train had been engaged—sat down to a most excellent dinner provided by the ladies of the parish. Among the many who did honor to the occasion were the Hon. L. O. Taillon, Premier of Quebec, the Rev. Fr. Vaillant, Mayor Whimbey of St. Lambert's, and several prominent priests from Montreal. Speeches were made by the curé, the Rev. F. X. Rabeau, who thanked Mr. Taillon and the visitors for their presence, and apologized for the want of space, the hall being overcrowded. Mr. Taillon responded to the call for a speech, and spoke in terms that were fully deserved of the energy displayed by the Rev. Curé and his parishioners, more especially by the ladies. He drew a neat contrast between bazaars for trade and those for religion or charity, exhorting all the visitors to be as diligent in buying as they had been in eating. Mayor Whimbey, in his official capacity, welcomed the visitors, and wished success to the bazaar.

After dinner the company adjourned to the temporary chapel and the Bazaar itself was formally opened under most favorable auspices and distinguished patronage. Judging by the numbers present, both at the dinner and at the opening, the Rev. Curé may be congratulated on a brilliant success, and the Catholics of St. Lambert's on enjoying the ministrations of a priest so energetic and so devoted.

For some years past the Catholics of St. Lambert's have been obliged to content themselves with a simple Low Mass on Sundays, said by an assistant priest from Longueuil. In November of last year, His Grace the Archbishop consented to erect St. Lambert's into a separate parish, and appointed as curé the Rev. F. X. Rabeau, assistant of St. Joseph's. It is owing to the untiring and self-denying energy of this earnest priest, who spares neither time nor labor in behalf of his people, aided by the cordial co-operation of his parishioners, that it has been possible, in less than three months, to organize so considerable an undertaking in aid of the new church so urgently needed.

The curé and parishioners are heartily grateful to those visitors, both Catholic and Protestant, who were present yesterday evening, and will gladly welcome many more. The Bazaar will last all through the week, and there will be a most attractive concert every evening.—*Com.*

RELIGIOUS NEWS ITEMS.

Out of a total population of 95,000 in the Sandwich Islands 24,000 are Catholics.

The Pope will shortly publish a jubilee encyclical, which will be a political, religious and social testament.

The Countess of Salibay of Turin, daughter of the Senator of that name, is about to become a Carmelite nun.

Ash Wednesday falls this year on Feb. 7, and Easter Sunday on March 25. These are the earliest dates on which these feasts can come.

Eight Sisters of Mercy are to have charge of the new hospital which will be opened at Des Moines, Iowa. At first a rented building will be occupied. Next summer a hospital to cost about \$50,000 will be erected.

Monsignor Satolli has written a letter to Rev. P. A. Bart, of Marshall, Mich., approving his course in advocating in the Catholic and secular press the holding of church property by trustees chosen by the clerical corporations, and opposing the plan of vesting the title to such property in the bishops.

Brother John McElroy, S. J., died at St. Mary's Church, Boston Mass., Monday afternoon of last week, of paralysis of the brain. He was the oldest member of the brotherhood of the Jesuit Order in this country. He was born in Ireland, May 1, 1812, and spent the last forty-seven years of his life at St. Mary's.

Deaconesses and Sisterhoods, in imitation of the Catholic Sisterhoods, are not confined to the Protestant denominations of Great Britain and America,

but have also been introduced into Germany, and the Lutherans have already numerous organizations of this kind, notwithstanding the fact that Luther, Beza, Melancthon, and the other leaders of German Protestantism condemned such associations indiscriminately.

BREVITIES.

The House of Representatives committee on appropriations will report next week a pension bill carrying \$150,000,000.

There died recently in the little town of Union Springs, in the southern part of the State of Alabama, a man who figured in one of the most interesting events recorded in United States history, Col. John L. Branch. It was he who gave the order to fire the first gun of the late war at Fort Sumter.

The Servian radicals have refused to accept the conditions on which the King would permit them to retain their cabinet portfolios, and an effort is being made to form a progressive liberal cabinet.

The insane asylum on the Boone county poor farm, at Boone, Iowa, was burned Tuesday night. Eight of the nine inmates lost their lives. A furious storm raged at the time of the fire and the thermometer registered 30° below zero.

The House of Representatives this week gave the ways and means committee its second defeat on the tariff bill by adopting the McRae amendment suspending the bounty on sugar and putting sugar on the free list.

"THE WELL OF SERPENTS."

There is a horseshoe-shaped mountain up in Manitoba which literally swarms with snakes twice every year. In the early fall these slippery customers gather here from all directions, mostly from the prairie country to the south. In one side of the mountain there is a circular hole, about fifteen feet deep, and as smooth as if it had been fashioned with a well auger, where tens of thousands of reptiles gather to spend the cold winter months. Persons who have tried to explore this immense snake den during the summer when the regular tenants were absent, say that dozens of subterranean passages lead out under the mountains in all directions from the bottom of the well. Capt. Silvers, Royal Engineers, estimates that he has seen as many as 300,000 snakes, of all sizes, knotted together and piled up in a semi-torpid state in this "well of serpents," as it is called in the northwest.—*St. Louis Republic.*

PRAYER ANSWERED.

HE KNEW WHEN AND WHERE AND WHAT TO PRAY FOR.

At the weekly prayer meeting in the Methodist Episcopal church at Elwood the other night the third person to offer up his tribute was a stranger, who was seated near the door, and whose petition to the throne of grace nearly paralyzed the good people who were present. He prayed as follows:—

"Lord, thou knowest I am a stranger here. Thou knowest I do not live here, but reside in a neighboring town. Thou knowest I have relatives in another town who I am on my way to see. Lord, thou knowest why I am here instead of there. Thou knowest why I can't be there. Lord, thou knowest just what I want. I want forty cents. Amen."

As the last words were ended, there was a commotion in the church. They all rose up and went down after their pocket-books, and the man soon had his forty cents and several more. His name could not be learned, but he lives at Lynn and was on his way to Center. His funds gave out when he reached here, and so he went to prayer meeting, and startled the Christian brethren by asking the Lord for what he wanted.—*Indianapolis Journal.*

A Boy's Letter.—"Dear Uncle,—We are to have a Christmas tree and supper. Your presents is requested."

School-teacher: And what will the Prince of Wales be when the Queen dies? Small boy: A poor orphan.

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