



"AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM."

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CONTROVERSY

BETWEEN DR. KING AND MR. EWART.

Dr. King and Separate Schools.
To the Editor of the Free Press.

Sir,—The Rev. Principal King, when thinking freely, is a clear headed and austere reasoner, but in a matter involving "Popery" (of which he says his church is "an uncompromising foe," if there is one anywhere) he is, to my mind, a mere psychological phenomenon. In so saying I trust I shall not be thought to attack the rev. principal's good faith, or to have in view the depreciation of the very high opinion usually, and properly, held in regard to him. Nothing could be further from my purpose. I do desire, however, to show that being an "uncompromising foe," he thinks as one, and thus makes grievous, and very palpable, errors with regard to the school case—errors, too, wholly without excuse, for their true character has often been exposed.

1. Dr. King said: "Up to this date, while there have been difficulties in other provinces—in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick—there never has been any case in which these difficulties have not been solved without invasion of provincial rights by the central parliament." By this time even uncompromising foes ought to know that there never were any school difficulties in Nova Scotia; and that with regard to the New Brunswick school case, the central parliament did interfere to the full extent of its jurisdiction. If Dr. King means to point out merely that parliament went no further than that, I can only wonder what use he can imagine the precedent is to him. And when he uses the phrase, "invasion of provincial rights," he forgot that he had just admitted that he could not deprecate Dominion interference, "as an unconstitutional procedure—invasion of provincial rights, for it seems now settled, that in the matter of education, the province is not possessed of unqualified autonomy, but exercises its right subject to appeal."

2. Dr. King added: "If there was to be interference now it would be a new thing in our system, almost amounting to a revolution. If it would be a new thing in our system" it is only because Dr. Caven, Mr. Dalton McCarthy, and their Equal Rights association, failed to sufficiently arouse the "sleepy Protestants" of Quebec to go on with their appeal to the Governor-General-in-Council in the Jesuits' Estate case. It is a mistake to think that the Catholics in Manitoba were the first to appeal to the Governor-General-in-Council as provided for in the constitution. It was the Protestants in Quebec that are entitled to that distinction. By what straining of language, too, can it be said that a proceeding in exact accordance with a statutory constitution, amounts almost to "a revolution." A word like that, surely, means something different from parliamentary action, upheld as to its authority by the highest court in the empire!

3. Dr. King's resolution opposes "the bestowment of public moneys in support of denominational or sectarian schools." "He would have more freedom," he said, "in denouncing the action if it were attempted by a branch of the Protestant church." Dr. King was perfectly honest when he said this, and that fact constitutes the interesting part of his case; for every one knows that although schools of his own denomination have been assisted by public moneys, he has never exercised any freedom whatever "in denouncing the action."

4. Prior to 1890 the doctor's college received a share of the public funds raised by the sale of marriage licenses. The same session which deprived the Catholics of support for their schools, deprived also Dr. King's college of this portion of its revenue. While in enjoyment of that revenue the doctor took the money and denounced nobody. When it was taken away he denounced the men who did it; and at the same time, upon fundamental principles, praised them for stopping the Catholic supplies.

5. At the same meeting of the synod at which the doctor made his recent speech, and denounced, upon principle, "the bestowment of public moneys in

support of denominational and sectarian schools," the Rev. Prof. Hart presented the report "of the present condition of the various schools and reserves under the care of our Church in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories." "This work extends over twenty-two reserves, with fifteen mission centres." Towards the maintenance of these schools the Dominion Government contributes large sums of money. The report does not say so, but the Dominion accounts do. The school at Regina receives about \$15,000 per annum, and the other schools \$72 per scholar per annum. Here was a great chance for denunciation, brought promptly under Dr. King's very nose; but it passed by, and the Catholic schools, which were in no way before the synod, were dragged there in order that they may be denounced.

6. But the doctor need go neither to the past nor to the mission fields for a chance to denounce "a branch of the Protestant church." In this very city the denominational college of which he is at the head, is to-day assisted by public funds; for it enjoys immunity from city taxation, which means that others have to pay more than their share in order to relieve its exchequer. That the doctor can fail to be shocked at this, I say, psychologically phenomenal, explainable, possibly, by this only, that while he is an "uncompromising foe" of separate schools, he is an uncompromising friend of Manitoba college.

7. But the "uncompromising foe" thinks that there ought to be a compromise. Dr. King's better nature struggles hard to assert itself against his professional antagonism. But what an extraordinary result ensues. While the Presbyterian dominates him he would have a compromise, which would not "deserve the name of compromise"—a mere modification "in slight details." But when the kindly nature of the man asserts itself he speaks in this way:

"A large portion of the Roman Catholic population is situated along the two rivers, where there are almost no Protestants; accordingly in nine cases out of ten the trustees would be Roman Catholics, and Roman Catholic teachers could not be chosen. If they used their school houses outside of school hours (and the school hours might be shortened for that purpose) for such religious teaching as a teacher having their confidence might be willing to give, all that moderate people would regard as reasonable would be gained; and other portions of the community than Roman Catholics might be led to look with more favor on the system through such relaxation of the law as to school hours. Some other arrangement might need to be made for such in remote communities as are found in Winnipeg."

Catholics, as I have often said, ask that in schools which none but Catholics attend it should be permitted that the Catholic religion might be taught to Catholic children, and that where (as in Winnipeg) there are children enough of both denominations to require several schools, that the Catholic children ought to be allowed to occupy one or more of them, so that they might get the benefit of religious instruction. Dr. King, if I interpret him aright, is not very far away from this. It is the concession of a very large portion of west Catholics have been most strenuously denied. The doctor's reservation as to "outside of school hours" may be to him a matter of everlasting principle; but if the school hours can be arranged so that they will not interfere with religious education, to my mind the principle is one "with a swivel to it"—to use the Rev. Mr. Grant's expressive phrase.

8. It seems impossible to get an "uncompromising foe" to understand the conscience argument. By the rules of the Catholic church it is the duty of Catholics (1) to establish Catholic schools wherever they can; (2) where there are such schools to send their children to them; and (3) where there are none they may (under certain limitations) send them to the public schools. If this be their duty surely it is a matter of conscience to perform that duty. This seems plain and easy enough; but what does the doctor make of it? According to him "Roman Catholics say that our public school system is an offence to their consciences, that their consciences forbid them to have anything to do with it, except to oppose it"—an "uncompromising foe" very seldom understands his enemy's position. Dr. King would not intentionally travesty Catholic doctrine. That a man usually clear headed, and

always honest, can pen such a burlesque of it, is I say, psychologically phenomenal.

Perhaps an illustration will help. All over this province and the Northwest Territories the Protestant denominations, in the wildest rivalry, are building little bits of churches, and fighting one another for possession of the settlers. How does this happen. The first eight or ten families worship together. When there are a few more, it becomes a matter of conscience to set up, say, a Presbyterian church. That is to say, Presbyterians will go to a Methodist church until they are strong enough (with the help of the mission funds) to have a room to themselves, and then, as a matter of conscience, they separate and go to their own church. I say "as a matter of conscience," for it is not a matter of economy, nor as a beautiful example of Christian harmony. In the same way, Catholics will go to a public school until they can do better, when, as a matter of conscience and in obedience to the rules of their church, they do do better. Is not that clear?

9. I do not blame Dr. King for falling in with the current nonsense about withdrawing the remedial order. In a lawyer of course it would be inexcusable, for there is no more power to withdraw the remedial order than there is to restore a corpse to life. Our Constitution says that when certain conditions are fulfilled the Dominion Parliament is to have jurisdiction over education to a certain extent. These conditions have happened—a remedial order has been made and compliance has been refused. Nothing that can happen can remove the jurisdiction which the Dominion Parliament now has to pass legislation.

JOHN S. EWART.

Winnipeg, Nov. 29.

A REPLY TO MR. EWART.

To the Editor of the Free Press.

Sir,—I notice that the speech given by me at the late meeting of synod on the education question has received Mr. Ewart's attention in your issue of this morning. This was to be expected. If it had failed to encounter his criticism, I would have been led to doubt the soundness of the position taken in it. Little, however, needs to be said in reply. Indeed, but for the endeavor to fasten the charge of inconsistency on me and by consequence on the church which adopted the resolutions proposed by me, I should have thought it unnecessary to take any notice of the letter.

The statement made in the first paragraph "that there never were any school difficulties in Nova Scotia" intended as a correction of what I had said, will be news to the Rev. Mr. Pitblado, the Rev. Mr. Hogg and other citizens from that province.

I still adhere to the statement as both fair and moderate, that the interference of Ottawa in the way, either of overthrowing the existing system of public education or of setting up another alongside of it, would amount almost to a revolution. To Mr. Ewart it is "a straining of language," thus to characterize "a proceeding in exact accordance with a statutory constitution." Take another case as an example. The queen's veto of a decision reached by both houses of the Imperial parliament, is also in strict accordance with her constitutional rights. How much short of a revolution would its exercise be in these days?

The only part of Mr. Ewart's letter requiring attention is that in which on three grounds he seeks to convict me and by consequence the church with me of inconsistency in maintaining that the bestowment of public moneys in support of denominational education is wrong in principle.

The first ground is, that the Presbyterian church (in common with the Anglican, Methodist and Roman Catholic churches) is in the receipt of public moneys in connection with its educational work among the Indians. This ground is obviously of no account for Mr. Ewart's purpose. Everyone who has given any attention to the subject knows, and none better than Mr. Ewart, that the position of the treaty Indians is altogether peculiar. They are the wards of the nation, the government stands to them "in loco parentis." In taking their lands, it has come under distinct obligations; one of which is the obligation to educate their youth. If, in these circumstances, the government, having regard to the civilizing influences of Christian ideas, choose to call in the aid of the various Christian organizations in conducting the education of Indian children; and these organizations respond to the call, and accept assistance (for it is no more than is given) from the public chest in support of the work, their doing so may be expedient or it may be inexpedient, it is certainly not inconsistent with the strongest protest against the use of public moneys in support of sectarian education, in respect of persons possessing the full rights of citizenship—persons towards whom the government sustains no such relationship as it does to the bulk of our Indian population, i. e. those with whom treaties have been

made—the principle here is the same with that in which all Christian governments employ and pay chaplains in the army and penitentiaries. One can surely maintain the right and even duty of the British government to send chaplains with the Queen's troops in camp and battlefield, and yet consistently protest against state-supported separate schools for the children of ordinary citizens.

The exemption of Manitoba college, in common with the other colleges, from municipal taxes, is the second ground on which the charge of inconsistency is based. This ground is just about on a par with the former. The college was placed where it is on the understanding with the council that it should enjoy this exemption. I need not say it gives back to the city vastly more than it receives in the means of higher education which it brings within the reach of every citizen at a very moderate rate. It shares this exemption from taxation in common with the churches and various other institutions. There are no doubt some excellent men amongst us, who disapprove of all such exemption, as inconsistent with the entire separation of church and state, but thus far the healthy common sense of society has refused to give its sanction to such extreme views. It may be due to my obtuseness, but it will need a great deal of argument from my friend Mr. Ewart to convince me that the exemption of Manitoba college from municipal taxes ought to close my mouth on the subject of the injustice of a separate school system supported by public money. It is obvious at least, that any charge of inconsistency based on this consideration would hold equally good on the ground of being a member of a congregation exempted from municipal taxation on its place of worship.

That the college of which I have the honor to be principal was, in common with the other colleges, in the receipt for a time of a small annual sum from the government supplies the third ground on which the charge of inconsistency is based. I at once admit its force; only I ask leave to add a word or two of explanation. I do not insist at all on the fact that the college, while connected with and sustained by the moneys of the Presbyterian church, is not sectarian in the sense that the separate schools of the Roman Catholic church were and are. For not only is the whole teaching of the college acceptable to Protestant and Catholic alike, the daily religious exercises even are such that Catholic students, which the college has seldom been without, have uniformly attended them. But not to insist on this, I may say that the college was in the receipt of this grant—made up of the proceeds of the marriage license money of persons married by Presbyterian ministers—when I came to teach it. It had, indeed, enjoyed it from the beginning. The grant grew, in a manner out of the voluntary bestowment on the then existing schools of similar moneys by ministers in the early pre-confederation times. As the government did not find itself in the possession of funds to undertake itself the work of higher education, it seemed a very small departure from right principle that to the colleges which, amid many difficulties, were actually doing this work, this old allowance should be continued, and I thought at the time, and may have said that it was rather a shabby act to withdraw it until the time then thought to be near, when the government itself was to commence to do something in the matter of higher education. It was, however, withdrawn, and if it be offered again to-day, I would decline for myself and believe I could say the same for the board of the college, certainly for its chairman, Chief Justice Taylor, decline to receive it. This may be news to Mr. Ewart; it has been well known for years past to the friends with whom I am accustomed to speak on college matters.

The only other point on which I may be allowed a word of comment is Mr. Ewart's account of the Catholic conscience. Even a cursory reader can scarcely fail to see how widely it differs from that given in various pronouncements on the subject by the head of that Church in this province. Which is correct? Archbishop Langevin's or Mr. Ewart's? On such a matter most people will probably come to the conclusion that it is safer to take the priest's than the lawyer's interpretation; though one might wish it otherwise, because the Roman Catholic conscience in Mr. Ewart's hands, if it has not, to use Mr. Grant's phrase, a swivel in it, is certainly more accommodating than is the conscience speaking through the lips of the archbishop.

JOHN M. KING.

Winnipeg, Nov. 29, 1895.

P. S.—It will be seen that I have taken no notice of Mr. Ewart's characterization of my speech as a "psychological phenomenon." Mr. Ewart is fond of employing these piquant catch-words. For myself, in any discussion, I trust I shall not be tempted either to use such personal characterizations or to criticize the use of them by others. They do not aid us in reaching either truth or justice.

Rejoinder by Mr. Ewart.

To the Editor of the Free Press.

Sir,—Dr. King seems to think that my object in writing a criticism of his speech was "to convict me, and by consequence the church, with me, of inconsistency in maintaining that the bestowment of public moneys, in support of denominational education, is wrong in principle." My object was not that, but this, to show that inasmuch as Dr. King's

college, and other Presbyterian institutions, were in receipt of public moneys, it could not, even from his own standpoint, be "wrong in principle," and that by a curious mental twist it only appeared to him to be so when Catholics got the money. By his own admission the principle was violated in favor of his college (although he says it was "a very small departure") up to the year 1890; and that he "may have said that it was a rather shabby act to withdraw it" at that time. That is my point, exactly, "It was a shabby thing" to put an end to this violation of principle, when the doctor's college was getting the benefit of it; but it was a praiseworthy act to term the same sort of thing violation of principle in the case of Catholic schools.

As to the public assistance given at the present day to his college, Dr. King says three things: (1) That it was so agreed with the city council—but surely if the principle be wrong the fact that there is an agreement will not make it right; (2) That the college "gives back to the city vastly more than it receives in the means of higher education, etc."—granted, but if the principle of "the bestowment of public moneys in support of denominational education is wrong, giving back value in education will not make it right. Let the doctor apply the same reasoning to Catholic schools and he will at once see the fallacy of such an argument; (3) That the same argument would apply to exemption from taxation of churches—I am not concerned to say whether or not it would. If the principle be wrong, the fact that its enforcement would hit the churches, will not make it right.

With reference to public moneys given to the Presbyterian church for educating Indians, Dr. King says: That "the position of the treaty Indians is altogether peculiar"; that the case is "not inconsistent with the strongest protest against the use of public moneys in support of sectarian education, in respect of persons possessing the full rights of citizenship"; and he says that the government has by treaty agreed to educate the Indians. Now supposing that the government has agreed to educate the Indians is that any reason for violating the principle that "the bestowment of public moneys in support of denominational education is wrong"? Surely the government can carry out its bargains without inducing the church to do that which "is wrong in principle." It is probably right, in principle, for the government to pay every dollar required both for equipment and running expenses of a Presbyterian school at Regina—a school in which Presbyterian converts are made, and it is absolutely wrong, in principle, for the government to organize the Catholics of Manitoba so that they may tax themselves for the support of their own schools, in which no converts are made! And why? Because in one case the Government has agreed to educate the Indians, and in the other there is no agreement, but only a duty to educate the half-breeds!

As to the Catholic conscience, I have no doubt that "a cursory reader can scarcely fail to see how widely" my account of it "differs from that given in various pronouncements on the subject by His Grace Archbishop Langevin." ATTENTIVE readers will find no difference. If Dr. King can do so I would be glad if he would point it out.

For fear of further misapprehension, let me add that I do not object to Presbyterian colleges getting government support, for I am perfectly satisfied that that they give value thirty-fold for every dollar they receive. All that I do object to is the condemnation of Catholic schools upon a principle that is of no value whatever when applied to Presbyterian institutions.

JOHN S. EWART.

Winnipeg, Nov. 29, 1895.

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