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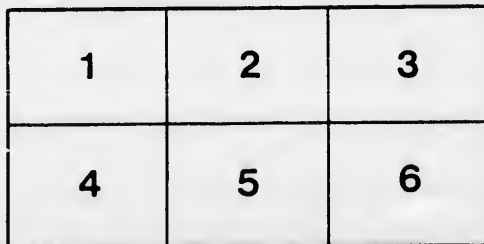
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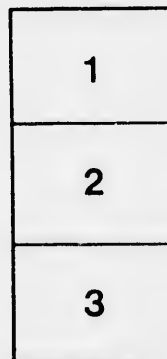
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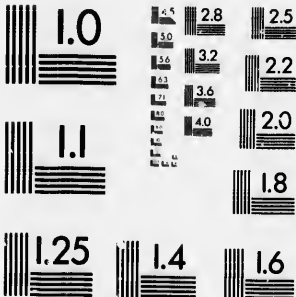
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PASTORAL LETTER

OF THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PROVINCES OF QUEBEC,
MONTREAL AND OTTAWA, REGARDING THE SCHOOL QUESTION
IN THE PROVINCE OF MANITOBA.

WE, BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE, ARCH-
BISHOPS AND BISHOPS OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PROVINCES OF QUEBEC,
MONTREAL AND OTTAWA,

*To the Clergy, Secular and Regular, and to all the Faithful of these
Provinces, Greeting and Benediction in Our Lord.*

We deem it opportune, Dearly Beloved Brethren, to recall to your minds today some of the grave principles which govern the relations that exist between the Catholic Church and the schools where children receive their primary instruction and the first lessons in Christian morals.

If it is true that the child is *naturally* dependent on the paternal authority, *supernaturally* he depends on the authority of the Church, which is the supernatural society for which God has created him, and into which he is obliged to enter, because, according to the actual ways of Providence, it alone can help him to attain his final end. Baptism, which he receives from the Church, at the request of his parents, gains him admission into this society, whose laws, concerning his salvation, he is

bound to observe. Therefore, in the plan of her Divine Founder, not only has the Church a right, it is even for her a duty to direct, through her ministers, the moral education of her children. This duty follows from the very mission confided by Our Saviour to His apostles and to their successors in the Church : « Teach ye all nations..... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.» (Matt. XXVIII, 20.) Therefore the Catholic Church alone has been commissioned to dispense, throughout all ages, religious and moral instruction to nations as well as to individuals. Hence she has the mission of directing the teaching of morals not only in the higher schools, but also, and perhaps more especially, in those schools where moral education is closely bound, inseparably united to instruction, as is the case in the primary schools. Without this control of the schools the accomplishment of her mission would become impossible. A child requires to know as soon as possible his duties towards God, and to be warned against evil passions at an age when his soul readily receives those lasting impressions that will aid him to pass through the dangers with which the world and the devil shall strew his path through life. « A young man according to his way, even when he is old, he will not depart from it.» (Prov. XXII, 6.) If from early childhood the young man has not been brought up in the love of the precepts of morality, he shall hereafter find difficulties well nigh insurmountable to observe those same precepts, and, consequently, to live a supernatural life, a life of Divine grace, and the solicitude of the Church shall find in him but feeble correspondence with her efforts to conduct him to his final end. The habits of his youth will lead him in another direction. Hence it follows that the Church being alone commissioned by God to teach men morals, cannot, at any period of their lives, abandon her mission. She is not free to renounce her action and control in the schools; under no consideration, under no form of government can she approve schools wherein youth receives no moral instruction. Therefore she always has reproved and ever will reprove the schools commonly styled « unsectarian schools »; because such a system is, of *its nature*, a serious danger to the religious and moral

education of youth, though *accidentally* it have not always a pernicious influence. This deplorable system, approved of in certain places, has wrought the loss of numberless souls and has accumulated the ruins of morals wherever it has been applied. Hereupon we have the competent and unchallengeable testimony of the Episcopate of the United States assembled in plenary Council in Baltimore: « A long experience, » they say, « has superabundantly proven the grave disasters, the intrinsic dangers, confronting the youth of these regions through the frequentation of public schools. Owing to the system in vigour in these schools our Catholic youth cannot but be exposed to great peril regarding their faith and morals. To this cause alone we should probably attribute the great progress of indifference in these regions, as also that corruption of morals which has deplorably infested and depraved the youngest of our children. » (Plen. Conc. Balt. II, No. 426.)

Consequently, it is with great surprise and profound grief we learn that, even here in our own country where religious liberty is so loudly proclaimed, that legalized attempts have been made to introduce that censurable and censured system of unsectarian schools, in order to deprive the Church of a right which is inseparable from the free exercise of Catholic worship, guaranteed by the faith of the treaties.

In another province of this land, inhabited by Catholics, they are trying, once more, an underhand and satanic persecution against the sacred rights of the Church. It was with emotion of heart we heard the Venerable Archbishop of St. Boniface raise his voice, once more, against this iniquity. In a pastoral letter, dated the 15th of last August, the Illustrious Prelate makes known this perfidious stratagem for perverting youth, forewarns his flock against it, and lets them see how odious it is.

« A trial of a novel kind has come upon us. In a land where freedom of religion is so loudly proclaimed, fetters have been placed on that liberty. Our social and political institutions warranted protection to all our rights, and now, behold the same rights trampled upon by the very persons who should

safeguard them. Here you are exposed to persecution ; not a bloody persecution which attacks the body or external life, but a persecution most cunningly masked, which attacks the intellect, hinders it from being enlightened by Christian light and guided by the reflexions of its divine splendours.

« You are aware that all those whom God has confided to your care must be formed, from earliest childhood, to a Christian life ; thence the necessity of Christian schools, and any school which has not this character cannot command the confidence of a Christian parent.

« You are, then, bound to allow your children to frequent such schools only as can keep in safety their faith and their morals. Alas ! in spite of all your care and vigilance it happens, only too often, that the child that leaves home to go and seek instruction is exposed to pernicious influence. At least, then, let not the school of your choice be for these young hearts a place of danger. Let the teachers to whom you confide them give you all desirable security ! Let them continue to exercise, over your children, your own sacred ministry. Let school and home harmonize in the formation of the heart. Let the words pronounced by master or mistress be an echo of those uttered by father and mother to the child, when teaching what is to be believed, and explaining the many duties which the service of God and the love of our neighbour demand. »

Then His Grace traces clearly the rights of the minority, and the rights of the Catholic Church, and discloses the nature of those schools which they would impose upon our brethren in Manitoba.

« A parliamentary majority, heedless of the sad spectacle presented by the ignorance of some of its members in matters regarding education, decreed to abolish our schools, and have decided that Protestant schools only will be acknowledged by the State and favoured by them. Again and again we have heard repeated and seen printed the terms : *National Schools, Public Schools, Unsectarian Schools*. All these words may sound more or less harmonious to the ears of certain people, but the pure and simple fact, divested of all deceit and reduced to its dire

reality is that, the Legislature, in abolishing Catholic schools, has passed laws which not only maintain Protestant schools in all their integrity, but even assure them, although *sectarian*, the entire share of the public money to which Catholics have a right. The law purposes even to force Catholics to pay to support these schools in which the faith of their children cannot but be exposed, and in which your most sacred convictions, My Dearly Beloved Brethren, are as sadly, as they are unjustly, belied.

« A cursory examination of the new laws suffices to show that they have been inspired by a feeling hostile to Catholicity, and that the Protestant idea governed all that legislation. »

On seeing this state of things by which it is desired to snatch away the faith of the children in Manitoba, strip the Church of its sacred and indestructable right, our hearts are overwhelmed with grief. As the guardians of the prerogatives of our Holy Mother the Church, we cannot look with cold indifference upon the persecutions she would fain be made undergo. It is a conscientious duty for us to remind all the faithful of our Provinces of the true doctrine concerning the control of the Church over the education of Catholic children in schools.

Without wishing to trespass on political grounds, We believe it necessary to proclaim these principles and to solicit their application in the name of Holy Church. As citizens we might make concessions, but as Catholics we cannot agree to do so. It is likewise the duty of every Catholic, to whatever party or social position he belongs, to prove himself a submissive and devoted child of the Church; and he is unworthy of this name, who would sacrifice his rights for any secondary consideration. It is treason to allow the Church to be persecuted, and her children severed from her by violence. Therefore is it every one's duty to pray, to labour, each in his own sphere of action, that perfect justice be rendered and this without upsetting the peace which is so necessary to the prosperity of our Country.

Shall be the present Pastoral Letter read and published in all Churches and parochial chapels of our dioceses, the Sunday following its reception

Made and signed by Us in the month of March of the year
Eighteen Hundred and Ninety-One.

- E.-A. Card. TASCHEREAU, Archb. of Quebec.
† EDOUARD-CHS, Archb. of Montreal
† J.-THOMAS, Archb. of Ottawa.
† JEAN, Archb. of Leontopolis. (a)
† L.-F., Bp. of Three Rivers.
† ANTOINE, Bp. of Sherbrooke.
† L.-Z., Bp. of St. Hyacinthe.
† N.-ZÉPHIRIN, Vic Apost. of Pontiac.
† ELPHÈGE, Bp. of Nicolet.
† LOUIS-NAZAIRE, Bp. of Chicoutimi.
† ANDRÉ-ALBERT, Bp. of St.-Germain de Rimouski.

By Order of His Eminence and Their Lordships,

B.-PH. GARNEAU, Pst,

Secretary of the Archbishopric of Quebec.

(a) Former Bishop of St. Germain de Rimouski.

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