

STATE SCHOOLS VS. OTHER SCHOOLS.

Relative Advantages and Disadvantages Explained by Rt. Rev. B. J. McQuaid.

CONTINUED.

DR. KENDRICK ANSWERED.

The Bishop thus answers Rev. Dr. Kendrick, who had an article on the "School Question" in the September Forum.

Rev. Dr. Kendrick laments that his fellow-citizens of Poughkeepsie have a correct sense of justice, and desire to deal fairly with their Catholic townspeople. It is greatly to their credit. They are not, however, the first in the country to rise above the bigotry of former days. Indeed, there are many towns and villages in this and other States where the same honest fairness has been observed for many years past, with even broader views of justice and a kinder spirit. Still, many Catholics doubt the advisability of the "Poughkeepsie plan." It has advantages and disadvantages. It smacks of a union of state and church which in a country like ours is not desirable. To some degree it weakens and deadens the catholicity of our school rooms. Because, forsooth, Catholics who have leased to the state, school buildings, for use during the allotted daily school hours, choose before and after such hours to occupy them, at their own expense, for lessons in religion—for those "religious enforcements" without which "morality cannot be effectively inculcated."

Rev. Dr. Kendrick is prompted to say: "Five minutes or one minute before the stroke of the regular school bell, they [the school buildings] may be the scene of religious exercises such as are not simply forbidden in the course of teaching prescribed by the state, but are actually offensive, in some of their features at least, to the vast majority of the American people. From lessons enforcing the worship of the Virgin Mary... the pupils pass—perhaps without breaking ranks, or special tokens of transition—to their secular lessons." The same performance takes place in innumerable state schools, unavoidably frequented by Catholic children. Evangelical prayers, hymns, and Bible lessons are enjoyed, morality is effectively inculcated through "religious enforcements," and the pupils pass, without breaking ranks, to their secular lessons. Catholics do not complain, except when those of their children who have come a few minutes before the regular school hour, are kept waiting at the door in the rain, snow, and cold, while their school companions have the luxury of evangelical prayers and warmth within. What does the school of Dr. Kendrick want? Must our school buildings be put on a par with saloons on election day? No liquor can be sold within a certain distance of a polling booth. Shall it be enacted that God shall not be named, and no religious exercises be held, within a certain distance of a state-school house? When religious exercises can no longer be held within state-school houses, either before or after the hours for secular lessons, it will be time for Christians to abandon them to the sole use of infidels of every stripe. Then Sunday-school work will become inoperative, and empty churches and vacant pulpits will cover the land.

Rev. Dr. Kendrick again writes: "When, however, we are confronted with the demand that the public school fund be split up and parcelled out among the various churches, the spirit of concession should be replaced by the spirit of inflexible resistance." Keeping in mind the scandals occasioned by the Bethel Baptist Church in 1820-21, which appropriated state-school money for Baptist church extension, the Doctor has cause for alarm. Catholics do not ask for a division of the school fund. Indeed, they fear the state. They ask simply for their own money, unjustly taken from them for the education of the children of infidels and Evangelicals. Is this amount much or little, it is demanded by every principle of common sense, and not one dollar of any one's money, they ask for, if this amount cannot be effected, then let the state pay for results in secular education, in any school, parochial, private, or corporate, furnish-

ing the state with the requisite conditions of buildings, furniture, and competent and certificated teachers, and instructing pupils in such branches of secular learning as they state may require. If one or the other of these plans is not acceptable to the majority of the American people, then let us return to fundamental principles and throw the burden of schooling children on parents, where it rightly belongs. We ought by this time to see how dangerous it is to break away from sound principles in running democratic institutions.

OBJECTIONS TO PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS REFUTED. The objections that parochial schools are not patriotic and are un-American; that they are not up to the standard of state schools; that they keep the children of a neighborhood from commingling, the Bishop refutes in the following pointed sentences:

Three objections are raised in opposition to the teaching of secular branches of learning in parochial schools, no matter how much inspection there may be on the part of the state: 1. These parochial schools fail to inspire their pupils with a patriotic love of country. 2. They are not up to the standard of state schools in secular learning. 3. They keep the children of a neighborhood from commingling one with another, and thus destroy the homogeneity—excuse the word—of the nation; something very desirable, it is said.

It is hard to be called on to reply to the first objection. It is false and cruel. Only they who are inimical to Catholics on any and every pretence, adduce it. Why are not some proofs furnished in sustenance of so wicked a calumny? A sufficient answer to this heartless aspersion on our honor as citizens, would be to invite these calumniators to visit our cemeteries and look on the tiny flags waving over the graves of patriots who died for their country's preservation. Members of the Grand Army of the Republic do not speak thus of their brothers in arms.

The second objection is equally false. It is not true that the standard of education in our parochial schools is not as high as that in state schools. In the city of Rochester both systems are well established, and are in fair and amicable competition. It is true that parochial schools are not victims to the vagaries of cranks. The latter are not permitted to run our schools nor are these under the domination of school-book publishers. Nor are they loaded down with music, modern languages, the mechanical arts, savings banks, and military drill. They give that which they propose to give, a good elementary education. As an illustration of the truth of my contention, I cite what takes place in Rochester. Regents of the University of the State of New York send out to all schools, state, parochial, and private, that ask for them, sets of examination papers. The answers to these papers must have 75 per cent. of correctness in each branch of study. State-school children are examined in their usual school buildings and before familiar teachers. Parochial school children are examined in the City High School and before strangers. The average age at which the latter graduate is fourteen years and two months; that at which the former graduate is over fifteen years. Another circumstance to be noted is the number entering the graduating class in September, and the number passing the regents' examination in June. In September of 1887, 18 entered the graduating class of the Cathedral School, and 22 that of the Immaculate Conception. All passed the examination in June, 1888. State school No. 4, in the same quarter of the city, had 28 in its graduating class at Christmas time, having already sifted out many that had entered it in September; and of these only 13 stood the regents' test in June. We are not able to give the average number of points gained by the graduates of each school, as these are not published. What is accomplished, in Rochester is a fair sample of successful results in other parochial schools of the State of New York. It may be asked, Why is the average age of

the graduating pupils of the parochial schools so much lower than that of those in state schools? These children, for the most part of Irish and German parents, inherit sound and vigorous constitutions; they are not spoiled by invidious and unhealthy feeding; they go to few night parties, if to any, and are consequently well rested in the morning, and fresh for another day's work; they have an object to work for, as they know that their future rests in large degree with themselves and the use they make of their early opportunities for study and self-advancement. No one will say that Celtic and Teutonic intellects are thick and slow of perception.

If our schools failed in secular studies, the blame could not be imputed to our teachers. These are mostly brothers and sisters who have consecrated their lives to educational work. With them it is a life work. Generally bright and intelligent when they enter a religious community, by daily study under competent teachers in normal schools, they prepare for the office of instructors. Their studies are kept up years after entrance into the school room, under the guidance of the most capable of their body. There is no time lost in talking over the fashions; none in paying or receiving visits. Theaters and operas are not for them. Why should they not be, what they are, first-class teachers? Some members of these communities are sent abroad to acquire what there is worth knowing in European normal schools, together with a fluency in speaking foreign languages.

The flurry at Haverhill last spring, the agitation that ensued, and the disposition manifested by some to bring the power of the state to bear heavily on our work, serve an excellent purpose. They warn the superiors of convents that the teachers they send into the school room must be thoroughly equipped in all that could by any possibility be demanded of them. In this sense the trials of the past will prove a blessing.

The third objection to parochial schools is that they hinder the commingling of the children of a neighborhood on the school playground, and thus fail to teach democratic equality. "Democratic equality" is a phrase with which to fool gudgeons. The wealthy of a town congregate in an aristocratic neighborhood, and right there will be found a state school, from which children of poverty will be, by force of circumstances, excluded. Thus the latter are deprived of social elevation through social commingling. Where this separation of rich and poor cannot be obtained in a district whose inhabitants are of both classes, the abolition of the recess removes all dangers of contact between the classes except in the class room. It is in parochial schools that the democratic notion of friendly equality is best carried out. The religious brotherhood of man is taught and practically lived up to in these schools. We are ready for other objections, only let them contain a bit more of common sense.

CATHOLIC POSITION ON THE SCHOOL QUESTION

The Bishop's, concluding sentences are devoted to a plain, logical and pointed statement of the Catholic position on the school question.

The building of school houses and the gathering into them of our Catholic children are going bravely on all over the United States, especially in Massachusetts. Now that the Bostonians are fairly aroused, we may look to them for largeness and thoroughness of plans in educational achievement. They will accept, I am sure, no compromise by which their religious element in their daily tasks can be lessened. They will do their best to turn out good citizens and good Christians.

Catholics hold a proud position in the face of their fellow-citizens, though it is one for which they are heavily fined by state-schoolism. In state schools, 1. Their parental rights and duties towards their children are infringed upon. 2. Their children's rights to a moral education and training by religious "enforcements" are seriously interfered with.

The natural dependence of children on parents is weakened. 4. The double taxation to which parents are subjected is irritating, unjust, and cruel; it is a hindrance to mutual esteem and to a kindly spirit among fellow citizens. 5. They are made to suffer for the sake of conscience. It is not necessary to tell us again that somebody else's conscience ought to suit us.

It is, in some measure, compensation for our wrongs to be able to hold up our heads and to glory in our self-imposed sacrifices. It is ennobling to stand on a true American platform, and to enunciate principles such as the founders of our Republic knew and upheld. We believe in parental rights, and in the right of a child to moral and religious training by the help of "religious enforcements;" we believe in all that tends to make a young man self-reliant and self-supporting; we believe in general education, as is shown by our school houses honestly built, and their pupils honestly maintained, without a cent of help from the state; we believe that a truly religious man will be an upright and worthy citizen. We detest state paternalism and state pauperism.

BOOM! BOOM! Gun No. 433 Heard From! Thousand of Homes Made Happy. The poor man's dollar as good as the rich man's. Down go the prices. Help us to keep them down. ROUND STEAK, 10 cts. SIRLOIN, 12 cts. PORTER HOUSE, 14 cts. Other Meats at Amazing Low Prices. at the Chicago Market, 433 E. Main. FRANKLIN & HALLENBECK.

IT PAYS TO BE LIBERAL with the public. Our new credit system has caught the town. They can get a fine gold watch, anything they read in this city or Silverware, and use of the goods while they ARE HAVING FOR THEM.

ROSSA & NOLAN THE LEADING INSTALLMENT JEWELERS. 146 E. MAIN ST. UP STAIRS. Over Carroll & Beadle's Dry Goods Store. N. B.—If you wish to pay cash we can honestly give you better bargains than you can get in the town. Give us youngsters in business a trial. The old heads have got money enough. C. B. L. BADGES A SPECIALTY.

W. MERK, Bookseller and Stationer. 234 E. Main St., - ROCHESTER, N. Y. Catholic Prayer Books in All Styles and Binding. Crucifixes, Candlesticks, Statues, Scapulars, Medals, Lace Pictures. The Best Assortment of Religious Pictures in the City. Candles, Incense, Tapers, Charcoal, Olive Oil, &c. at Special Prices to the Clergy.

MUSIC. Sheet Music and everything in the Musical Line. Best Quality and Lowest Prices. GIBBONS & STONE PIANOS AND MANY OTHER KINDS. Estey Organs, Empire State Organs, Fine Violins, Guitars, Banjos, Etc. GIBBONS & STONE, No. 110 East Main Street.

H. & J. CONOLLY, Practical Paper Rulers and Book Binders. Periodicals, Magazines, Catholic Papers, Etc. bound in all the latest style bindings at the lowest rates. Over 73 Main Street Bridge. Up one flight.

Jos. Engel, Manufacturer of Fine Furs. 89 East Main St., ROCHESTER, N. Y. (FIRST FLOOR.) FINE Seal and Fur Lined Garments. Made to order a specialty. All kinds of Fur Goods made over, Redyed and repaired at lowest rates. Sign of Black Bear.

Go to GEBHARD F. SCHWARZ' WEST SIDE CANDY STORE FOR YOUR HOLIDAY CANDIES. He keeps a large assortment of Fine Candies, Nuts, etc., on hand for the holidays. 236 West Main. Near the bridge.

MARVIN F. KINNEY, Dress and Cloak Making. In Latest Designs and Styles. Cutting and Fitting by Baynes' Paris Glove Fitting Taylor System. Lessons given in Oil Equal to the Finest Art at the Cheapest Prices in the city.

Tailor Made Jackets a Specialty. Room 6, Washington Hall Block. Cor. Main and Clinton Sts. B. J. BURKE, LIVERY AND BOARDING STABLE. REAR 111 EAST AVENUE. TELEPHONE 587, ROCHESTER, N. Y. Saddle Horses can be Rented by the Hour.