

CATHOLICS ANTAGONIZE IT.

THE SCHOOL QUESTION.

The Bennett Law Arraigned by Bishop
Flasch at La Crosse.

LA CROSSE, Wis., Jan. 31.—It has been a matter of considerable speculation by the friends and advocates of the Bennett law as to what stand the Catholic clergy of the state would take when the measure came to be an issue in politics, as it is now generally conceded it will. The Lutheran ministers have been uniformly outspoken in condemnation of the measure, but up to last night not a Catholic priest has been heard to give public utterance on the subject of compulsory education and parochial school supervision by the state.

It remained for Bishop Flasch to break the ominous silence, however, and at the celebration of the 31st anniversary of the St. Joseph society last evening he gave utterance to words that have the deepest significance, coming as they do from a high official of the church, and one who is in close communion with Archbishop Heiss, of the Milwaukee diocese, and who has become generally accepted as the coming coadjutor to the venerable archbishop in his work in the metropolis of the state.

Bishop Flasch's theme was "Religious Instruction of the Young," and in the course of his remarks on the subject he arraigned the Bennett law as opposed not only to his church, but to his mother country. He denounced all forms of infidelity, declaring that without the spiritual training of youth there could be no enduring religion, there could be no state. What he demanded for Catholics was the right to educate their children according to their own belief, unmolested by the state or by organized individuals.

It is generally believed that Bishop Flasch's address last night was intended not only for the ears of every person around the festal board, but also for Catholic priests in every corner of the state.

Father Schwebach, who followed Bishop Flasch, spoke in the same strain in handling his subject, "Religion and Patriotism," he exhorted his hearers to think and talk politics, to be true Americans and true Catholics by sustaining every institution of the church—its schools and societies, as well as its altar. The address was regarded as the Reverend Father's greatest effort, and was much applauded.

Total receipts for two years....

The Real Purpose and Spirit of the Bennett
Law.

Madison State Journal: The Bennett law was conceived by American patriotism to protect and bless the poor boy by insuring him the largest advantages of citizenship, and especially by affording him, if the son of foreign parents, an equal chance in life with every other child. It is American patriotism to see to it that every citizen is clothed with the highest qualifications of American citizenship. It is American patriotism to provide that every child born in this land shall have one of the chief attributes of an American—a knowledge of the language of our people, that he may have access to the common life of this nation, and be able to use every privilege that it may afford. It is American patriotism to foster the national spirit by insisting that no one shall be shut off from the cosmopolitan currents of American life, and also by demanding that no boy, however obscure, shall grow up ignorant of the universal means of communication in this land; that tongue in which the laws are written that govern him, and by which alone he can have the fullest association with all the life about him. It is the high-water mark of American patriotism to equip the poor boy, wherever he may be, with this elemental power of our national life.

This is the sole intent of the Bennett law, which is wise in its spirit and moderate in its demand, and absolutely destitute of any reference to religious matters. There is no trace of persecution in its provisions, and its operations cannot restrict any religious privileges or injure any ecclesiastical interests. It is wrong to impute any motive but patriotism to its friends; it is folly to contend that it trenches upon the rights of any class of people in our midst. It passes no judgment upon parochial schools; it casts no reflection upon denominational education; it abridges the right of no parent; it simply demands in behalf of the child that somewhere and somehow he must be given a reasonable knowledge of the English language. And why? To teach him disrespect for the church of his fathers? To divorce him from piety? To defeat his speaking German, Norse and French? No such absurd result is contemplated or is likely to follow. The simple reason is that he may be equipped as an American citizen in order that he may be master of himself and of the situation before him.

It is the greatest mistake, hardly less than a crime, to imagine evil of this law, or to read into it any menace to religious liberty, or to drag it into partisan discussion. No man would be quicker to defend Catholic or Jew in the exercise of his religious liberty than our present governor. The men most alive to the sanctity of private opinion and most watchful of the rights of the individual, civil and religious, are

In the Republican party—the party of liberty, of progress, of equality, and of fraternity. The people of foreign birth or parentage in our state are, as a rule, it is hoped universally, reasonable and patriotic and there is no probability that they will see in this measure any menace to their religious liberty or any attack upon their mother tongue.

If this law is brought into political discussion it will not be by the action of its friends or by the advice or consent of the leaders of the Republican party. If there are enemies of the public schools in our midst, and if they make use of this wise and patriotic statute as the objective point of an attack upon the common schools, then the Republican party will stand by the little red school-house on the hill—the sanctuary of American liberty and the poor man's university. If an assault is to be made upon the American state, and upon that essential part of the American state, secular education, let it come as soon as possible; and let the issue be made clear and sharp. The Republican party, the friend of every church, but the dictator to no man respecting matters of religion, will stand by the American state. And we need have no fear about the result. The American sentiment is sovereign in this land, and while all ecclesiastics and rites will by it be protected, it will bow to no churchman and become the advocate of no dogma; neither will it surrender its duty of education.

The little district school-house is very dear to the American heart, and whoever lays the hand of violence upon it will evoke a storm of wrath which no power on earth can withstand. It is impossible to tell what motive may lurk behind this opposition to the Bennett law, but if its opponents are preparing for an attack upon our public schools, let them beware. As Mr. Crozier, our fellow townsman, has pointed out in his recently published work, "Problems in American Society," where a chapter is devoted to the discussion of this question, the manifest destiny of American civil institutions lies within the sphere of secular action known as the modern state, and secular, but not irreligious, schools are a necessary and essential part of the structure of the modern state, and as there pointed out, any attack upon our public school system is by implication and by direct influence an attack upon the form of government which the people of the United States have adopted, and the only one that could be adopted.

But we trust that this issue will not be raised. We deplore the injection of the sectarian spirit into political discussion. Nothing could be more unfortunate than a partisan campaign addressed to the religious prejudices of our people. No such issue will be raised by the Republican party. It will always stand for the religious, as well as the civil, rights of all parts of our population. The wise course for us is to keep cool, patient and

tolerant. Let us not add fuel to the fire of denominational hatred. Let us give our excited friends time to reflect, that they may see that no wrong is intended or will be done to any one by the Bennett law, which is simply the protection of American patriotism thrown around every American lad. But if the issue is forced upon us and we are compelled to appear as advocates of the secular character of the American state, then the Republican party will be true to its traditions of loyalty to civil and religious freedom. It will stand by the little red school-house and it will win.

IN New Jersey, as elsewhere, some of the ecclesiastics deny the right of the state to compel children to attend school. This has led legislators to declare that if the state has not that right, then that right shall not be exercised by any other power, foreign or local; that if the state cannot prescribe a penalty for parents who do not send their children to school, no church shall prescribe a penalty for parents who do not send their children to church schools; that if the right of the state to fine a man for not sending his child to school is denied, then the right of the church to send a man to hell for not sending his children to a church school shall be denied. The fact is that the Catholic authorities in New Jersey believe in compulsory education—provided they can exercise the compulsion.

THE Manitowoc Pilot thinks the interview with young Coleman claims attention "both for the dictatorial attitude of Mr. Coleman and the utterances of those for whom he was the medium of communication." It thinks that "in the whole history of politics no parallel instance of consummate egotism on the part of an editor can be

found, and the ordinary insolence of position blanches at the recital of messages from Washington of which he was the bearer." It then comments on the violation of the rules of ordinary propriety in Secretary Rusk's alleged criticism of Gov. Hoard, and it is cruel in defining the limitations of Congressman Van Schaick. The Pilot pays more attention to the man than it deserves. No comments can make young Coleman's egotism more apparent than his own remarks, and none are needed as to the Milwaukee member of congress. As to Secretary Rusk, we doubt if he has been correctly reported and we are well convinced that the Wisconsin senators did not "authorize Mr. Coleman to lecture the people of Wisconsin on their presuming to enact a compulsory school law without leave granted."

CALLED TO ARMS

Catholics Begged to Rise
Up in Their Might.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS DENOUNCED AS
HEATHENISH INSTITUTIONS.

A Mockery of Justice and the Bennett
Law Contrary to God's Com-
mands—A Bigot's Har-
rowing Appeal.

From The German Catholic Excelsior.

Hab frischen Muth
Du deutsches Blut;
Auf Gott vertraue!
Und—um dich haue!

—Dr. F. W. Weber.

Just at the present time the above words of Westphalia's great poet, the author of "Dreizehnlinden," seem to find their full significance, also, in the United States, or, at least, they should be translated into the energetic life of the day. Although spoken as an incitement during a time when Germany was threatened with war, these inspiring and courage-giving words of the famous poet are still better adapted for the German element in the great republic of North America. Against the German (German-American) of the United States confederation, which latter, without regard to the different nationalities, not only admits every peaceable and industrial race, but which also lifts its protecting hand against unjust encroachments—against the German, too, a war is kindled more important and threatening greater danger to the individual than the war which made the sword tinkle when, the last time in history, the hereditary son of the German lands rose up against them. A war which cannot prove the courage of the German in the open field inasmuch as the missiles used are partly thrown secretly and, what is still more cowardly, miserable and mean, partly from their own camp into the very marrow of the Germans—against their language and religion.

An eager pen has oftentimes recalled these words of Dr. Weber, even if only in prose, to the German-Americans, but particularly to the Catholics of German origin.

They intend to take away from you, noble German (you, who, though poor, helped to convert the clods of this fair land into tillable acres), your heritage, your language!

They intend to forbid you, brave German (you, who brandished the sword for the starry banner), your noblest treasure on earth, your melodious mother-tongue!

No. 1.]

They wish to (and that is the most important)—they want to, self-sacrificing German! (you, who, with the labor of your hands and your sweat, built churches for yourself and Catholic parochial schools for your children, in order to preserve your best goods, your religion and your mother-tongue)—they want to subjugate you now! they want to make you the slave of others.

After you have always contributed for the public schools, and by force of legislation which, in this respect, is a mockery to all justice, must still continue—after all that, you are not permitted in a free land to send your children to a private institution which was built with your own money!

Know you, German-American citizen, what a German poet says?

That God, who made iron grow,
He would have no bondmen!

And a slave you become, German, if you let yourself be robbed by a flagitious hand of your language and, with it, of your religion.

Who is it that gives these despots who concocted the much-talked-of Bennett law for the ruin of the chaste and beautiful German language, for the eternal detriment of the religion of children; who, I ask, gives authority to these officials, who act in true Russian knout style, after having been elected by the people, to pass a law which is not in conformity with the constitution of the United States, and by which millions of citizens of the country are continually slapped in the face?

They pretend that they are anxious for the welfare of the children; these should learn at least "a little English." As if the German in America needed a Hoard and consorts for guardians! As if we did not know ourselves and to our own satisfaction that our children must learn in this country not only a little, but much, very much English.

First of all, however, the officers of the state must learn that without religion and without conscience, even with any amount of English, no good citizen, that is, one who, from internal valid reasons, obeys the laws of the authorities, because from God, can be produced.

And in our religion we possess that inalienable inheritance from our fathers which we must leave unimpaired to our children. Must leave? Yes, we must, for religion can not be transplanted from your dying-bed into the heart of your child. That must be begun the same as with every other seed, early in the spring and steadily ever after, so that the seed of religion may germinate, grow and thrive for your children's and your own temporal and everlasting welfare.

What think you, dear reader of these lines, of a farmer who begins to sow his grain when others have begun the harvest?

Which then is the seed-time of religion as regards your children? As soon as your

children have begun to use their reason; and then one needs not, one must not wait, with most children, until their sixth or seventh year.

Where is the climate which alone permits the seed of the Catholic religion to germinate without hindrance? In a Catholic family, and together with the Catholic family, in the Catholic parochial school. Transplant a southern fruit to northern regions, and you need not expect any result from your efforts. Everybody knows that; the climate is too raw, too cold and unfavorable.

If you send your child to a Protestant, a Jewish or a heathen school, how then can a sensible person expect your child to become a Catholic?

And remember, every public school is neo-heathen!—because a public school, as such, does not believe in a God and, consequently, in no commands of God, nor does it teach them.

The only true and logical consequence of the above discussion is this: Those parents who are enabled to send all their children to a Catholic school and who do not do it, commit a grave sin against God, the friend of children; against the church, to whom God entrusted the education of children; against the welfare of their own children whom they suffer to become heathens in the heathenish schools.

Even Hoard and the Bennett law can not undermine this, for laws which compel one to act against God's commands are subordinate to what the apostle says: "For we ought to obey God rather than men."

It is a simple fact that, with the German, faith is closely allied to the German language. If, now, it is the design to take from your children their mother-tongue then this is explained by their desire to quickly estrange your children from religion. This is the true object of the Bennett law.

O German blood
Good courage show;
Put trust in God
And—smite the foe!

But how to smite! Should the Germans revolt against the lawful authorities? Take care! What then? They must, all and every one, without regard to sects, use the rightful and just weapon, the vote, and smite in this manner bravely as is the known custom of Germans to do.

Give your vote to no one who wants forcibly to rob you of your mother-tongue. But still less should you help elect any one

whose principle it is to act against your religion, your Christian conviction, your conscience. Show it now, ye German-Americans, that you are worthy of your ancestors who never shrank back from a just fight! Show, electors, what you think of those men whom you helped to elect, and who now abuse you by laws contrary to liberty, that you know and understand in the future how important is the hour when you approach the ballot-box.

THE SUPPORTERS OF THE BENNETT LAW.

Manitowoc Pilot. One thing in connection with the discussion of the Bennett law is peculiar, and that is that those papers most intent upon sustaining the principle of the law are published in localities in which the German element largely predominates. Not only this, the subscription list of these papers is made up largely of Germans and the papers seem to rely upon the Germans to sustain the law. The Pilot and The Chronicle are published in a county in which the Germans are equal in number to all other nationalities. Very nearly one half the subscribers to the former are Germans, and over one half of the subscription list of the latter are Germans. The Chilton Times is published in a county in which the German element is strong. The same thing is true of The Appleton Crescent and The Kaukauna Sun. These papers are Democratic but all have indicated clearly what their position is with reference to this law. The Manitowoc Tribune, an independent Republican paper, leaves no doubt as to its position. The Milwaukee Sentinel, published in the German Athens of America and circulating largely in that section of the state which is mainly German, is so outspoken as to leave nothing to inference. All these papers may, with good warrant, speak for the Germans, as their patronage largely comes from that class. There is not a paper mentioned that would not fight the good fight for principle, no matter by whom opposed. But in the present instance they are sustained by intelligent public sentiment.

An editor of an English paper in this state which is loud in its protestations of devotion to the Germans and which assumes that all Germans are opposed to the Bennett law, and for this reason comes out in opposition to the law itself, lately stated in conversation, when he thought he was not overheard, that "it was hard to have to stand up for the Dutch but it was policy for the paper to do so." It is such men as this one quoted who seek to arouse national prejudice on a simple question of education, solely for the advantage which might result to them. There are some Germans who believe the law is designed to ultimately prevent the teaching of German. There are many supporters of parochical schools who believe the law is a blow aimed at their schools. Though both are mistaken their belief justifies their opposition.

All others who oppose the law are demagogues. They fancy there is an uprising among the Germans in opposition to the law and they are anxious to obtain a prominent place on the loaded wagon. It is Polonius seeing a camel or a whale in the cloud just as the prince may direct. But Polonius' heart does not go with his words and Hamlet is not deceived.

What time-servers many of the papers

of Wisconsin are. And how they mistake the temper of the people in being so. There is no other paper in the state having one-tenth the circulation among the Irish people that The Catholic Citizen has, and yet there is no other paper in the state which lashes them so mercilessly for their faults. It does not lose by it. The Germans never yet slaughtered a man for criticising them when they deserved it. And the Germans by no means feel grateful to those self-appointed champions who try to make it appear that the entire nationality is arrayed against the public schools, no matter how honeyed the words or how obsequious the demeanor of those anxious to raise the issue and seeking an alliance with what they think the stronger side. It is those who oppose the public school, and the education which the public schools should give, against whom the war is waged and they are not known by any distinctive national term. This is the issue and on this the battle must be fought.

MR. KOERNER'S CRITICISM.

To the Editor of The Sentinel:

GRAFTON, Wis., Feb. 15.—In The Sentinel of Saturday, Feb. 15, among the unreasonable comments on "Memorie Gratia," grossly perverting Mr. Koerner's criticism of the Bennett law, the following is so to be found:

Koerner—Some of our church holy days are observed on week days, and may occur during the period of consecutive attendance, etc.

Comment—Well, yes; the Seventh-Day Adventists claim that they may ignore our Sunday laws, because they are in conflict with their creed. Supposing an American legislature should attempt to make laws in conformity with all religious absurdities, what would be the consequence?

It would be well for "Memorie Gratia" to study the statutes of Wisconsin before undertaking to comment on Mr. Koerner's criticism. Well, yes; the legislature of Wisconsin has already made a law in conformity with the religious "absurdity" of the Seventh-Day Adventists and others who conscientiously believe that the seventh, or any other day of the week, ought to be observed as the Sabbath. Revised Statutes, Chapter 186, Section 4,595—Any person who shall keep open his shop, warehouse or workhouse, or shall do any manner of labor, business or work, except only works of necessity and charity * * * on the first day of the week shall be punished by fine not exceeding \$10, etc. Section 4,596—Any person who conscientiously believes that the seventh, or any other day of the week, ought to be observed as the Sabbath, and who actually refrains from secular business and labor on that day, may perform secular labor and business on the first day of the week unless he shall wilfully disturb thereby some other person or some religious assembly on that day. Fiat applicatio memorie gratia.

FRED. WESEMANN.

Correct: JOHN HERZEL.

TWO VIEWS OF IT

Opposing Opinions of the Bennett Law.

MEDFORD WALDBOTE VS. THE MILWAUKEE GERMANIA.

While One Declares the Law to Be Just
and Proper, the Other Continues
to Misrepresent Its Terms
and Purposes.

Translated From The Medford Waldbote.

The Waldbote is one of the few German papers which in the Bennett law controversy sides with those who not only assert that the state has the right, but deem it its duty to control all schools. We are preëminently American citizens; all we are, all we possess identifies us with this great country. Our being of German descent, if at all considered, can be but of secondary importance. Whether citizens by birth or not; whether descendants from Irish, Scotch, German or Russian, we become the moment we take the oath of allegiance a part and parcel of the American people and must serve the national interests, all being subservient to the will of the people. Many seem surprised that the will of the people is becoming more and more powerful, while the right of the individual is being more and more restricted. This has, however, always been the case. The right of the individual is most pronounced when the national ties are the weakest, as among nomads or hunters. The individual sacrifices his personal liberty in direct proportion to the union of family and community, community and state. The coin with which we pay the state for its care and protection bears the stamp of our personal liberty. Many cannot comprehend this, as, for example, Col. Krez, of Milwaukee. Formerly if a neighbor injured our property we avenged ourselves by retaliation. To-day we cannot thus take the law into our own hands, but are compelled to enter a complaint against the offender, whose punishment becomes a duty of the state. Such is one of the many examples which may be adduced. The same applies to education. In the modern state the parent does not exclusively mold the child's destiny. "Who molds the youth, to him belongs the future," says a well-known axiom, and our public school system is based upon the principle that it is the duty of the state to see that the rising generation is so taught that the children, on entering life,

so far master the elementary branches, such as reading, writing and arithmetic, in the language of the land, as to enable them to successfully cope with the world. This is the duty of every state. Why do not those who are so strongly opposed to the Bennett law refer to Germany, Austria or France, where all private schools are under the control of the state, to which they must give satisfactory evidence as to what branches are taught and how they are taught? We by no means wish to place obstacles in the way of private schools; we believe indeed that many private schools are model schools, which may well serve as examples to our public schools. But these private schools can only serve as a model for our public schools when they fully meet the requirements of the Bennett law, by enforcing instruction in the English language, to-wit: A thorough knowledge of the English language, and such familiarity with its idioms that it, and not a foreign tongue, will possess the minds of the young. It is an established fact, however, that foreign languages are predominant in many private schools and that the English language is either not taught at all or merely as a subordinate branch. We also find in the state thousands of children, graduates of private schools, who can not speak English at all; we therefore consider the new school law as formulated in the Bennett law absolutely necessary.

We stand boldly on the side of those who grant the state the right, or rather consider it the duty of the state, to control all schools. Such a supervision will be beneficial alike to the state and to the private schools. The latter will be forced to abandon certain arbitrary ways and learn to respect more the national interests and the unsectarian character of the public schools; the former will become cognizant of certain methods used in private schools from which they may profit. We must never forget that our constitution expresses the noble conception of men who sought to free themselves from the oppression of political tyranny and denominational slavery. This conception forms the corner stone of our public school system, while 99-100ths of the private schools are denominational which do not educate their pupils as free men in the sense of a Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Hamilton, Henry, Franklin and others, but endeavor to hold them for their respective denominations. The rights and liberties granted by the constitution have made it possible for the various denominations to develop in this country as in no other in the world, therefore they should respect the spirit which called forth our public school system. The time will come, and it is not far distant, in which Protestants and Catholics, now the one, then the other, will be glad to obtain the casting vote of those educated, not on a denominational basis, but in the spirit as expressed in

our grand constitution as inculcated—or at least as it should be inculcated—in our public schools.

The demand in the Bennett law, that the American history be taught in the English language, is also fully justifiable, for two reasons:

1. The children find in the original text that spirit which rendered great the founders of the union.

2. The children become acquainted with certain political forms, legal terms, and the language of public documents, a knowledge useful to them in after life.

Translated From The Germania.

One can scarcely realize what idiotic nonsense is dished up to people about the Bennett law. Take for example our state superintendent of schools, Mr. Thayer. He is reported to have said at a convention of county school superintendents held at Madison, that no intelligent man would oppose the thorough enforcement of the Bennett law, if he was well informed as to its objects. In other words this means: Mr. Thayer considers the multitude of Germans who are not satisfied with the Bennett law as ignorant blockheads. For a man must be a blockhead who takes any interest whatever in the subject and does not yet know what the Bennett law has reference to and what it means. Mr. Thayer is the apt pupil of our worthy governor, who, as everybody knows, considers the Bennett law as a sort of crown of legislative wisdom, his motives being pure sympathy for the poor German children growing up in stupidity and ignorance. However, it is only necessary to look about in Wisconsin to see how little the ignorant Germans of Wisconsin need Mr. Hoard's sympathy. For of all others in Wisconsin the Germans have reason to be proud of their history and development. German business men are foremost in Milwaukee, as well as in most cities of the state; every one of them—and many to-day count their wealth by the hundred thousands or even millions—began as a poor young man and developed without the help of the governor and his Bennett law. And who is it that lives in the cleanly and in part already elegant homes, which spring up almost like mushrooms every year by thousands on our city limits? German workmen. Then again, have the German farmers, who have transformed the Wisconsin wilderness into a garden during the last two generations needed the Bennett law? We haven't heard so. The stupidity and ignorance of the poor Germans, that Messrs. Hoard and Thayer feel obliged to oppose through the Bennett law, must be a new thing then.

Lately the English newspapers of the stamp of The Milwaukee Sentinel have endeavored to attribute the opposition among the Germans to the Bennett law to their hostility toward the public schools or

even toward the English language. Nothing can be more absurd or more false as far as the German Protestants are concerned. These latter have on every occasion admitted that our public schools, such as they are, are a necessity; they have called especial attention to the excellent results sometimes attained by them and they have repeatedly expressed themselves as cheerfully willing to fulfill their duties in supporting these schools by taxation. All this has been so explicitly set forth in the declarations of different synods and particular pastors—we will merely call attention to the admirable declaration of President Schwan, of the Missouri synod, in The Chicago Tribune—that it is impossible not to take cognizance of it unless purposely. The same is true of the English language. No German is prejudiced against the English language or desires to keep the knowledge of the language from his children. On the contrary, we admit that every American, whether a native or an immigrant, should secure as much familiarity with the English language as he is able to. But we protest with all our might against the assumption of such of our fellow citizens as claim the title of "Americans" for themselves alone, that the German language is a foreign language here in America.

And it is just this—all assertions to the contrary notwithstanding—that provokes the zealous advocates of the Bennett law. To such people who will recognize as "Americans" only those whose ancestors lived here during the war of the revolution, the German who clings to his home customs and to his glorious native tongue is an annoyance. It is not sufficient for them that we should become Americanized—we want to do that in the proper manner, of course—but they want us to become de-Germanized. And they think that can be accomplished first by destroying German schools. Their calculation is certainly a correct one. Aside from immigration, which it is sought to restrict in every possible manner, the German element in America has its greatest strength in the German schools. In destroying these, as the Bennett law seeks to do, the German element would lose one of the main conditions of its existence. The calculation is well made, therefore. One thing, however, was not taken into consideration. That is, that the Germans will not allow their schools, for the creation of which they have worked for half a century, to be taken away from them by means of a sort of sleight-of-hand trick.

Such is—if we understand it correctly—the feeling among the Germans of Wisconsin. It is false to assert that the Germans are opposed to the public schools—we are ready to defend these schools against every attack—and it is an impudent lie to say that the Germans who oppose the Bennett law are arrayed against the English language. All that

the Germans ask is the right to regulate the schools supported by them as may seem best to them and to preserve the German character of these schools as a bulwark of old German customs and as a bulwark of the German mother tongue. The Germans are defending these when they oppose new-fangled laws, and when they stand firmly together against every attack, no matter from what direction it may come.

WHY THEY OPPOSE THE BENNETT LAW.

To the Editor of *The Sentinel*:

MERRILL, Jan. 4.—In reading the correspondence published in *The Sentinel*, both for and against the Bennett law—there is one point I fail to see mentioned by those in favor of the law, which is a peculiar feature in the case of the Lutheran clergy in this part of the state at least. Now I have in mind seven Lutheran ministers (who live not a hundred miles from here), who are each preacher and teacher in a Lutheran church and parochial school connected therewith. These seven Lutheran ministers are bitterly opposed to the Bennett law.

Four of the above ministers cannot speak the English language; the other three can only speak it very imperfectly, but neither of the seven can read or write it.

Now, if the Bennett law were in force it would necessitate the hiring of seven teachers for these seven parochial schools—who understood the English language—and as a result would reduce the salaries of the above seven ministers to about one-half.

Is it not plain that self interest compels those men to oppose the Bennett law? And is it not a supposable case that self interest is at the bottom of a good deal of the personal opposition to the law? Col. Krez and others, for instance.

AMERICAN.

GOV. HOARD AND THE LIBEL LAW.

To the Editor of *The Sentinel*:

The innocent and venerable editor of *The Evening Wisconsin*, in his issue of last Saturday, gives the following extract from *The Sentinel*:

E. D. Coe read a paper, which was provocative of a lively discussion, in which Gov. Hoard led off with a declaration of his idea that no newspaper editor should have more protection than a private individual; that the present law contains all that is necessary to its proper and just protection of the editor, and that if he violates the sanctity of a man's private life, or if he publishes a libel, he should be held to a strict accountability for his language.

He then proceeds to urge the editors of *Wisconsin* to do all in their power to defeat the election of Gov. Hoard if he is re-nominated. It seems to me, not an editor, that the utterance by Gov. Hoard, as stated above, will compel all who believe that the sanctity of a man's private life and home ought to be free from the intrusion of outsiders to see to it that the present governor be kept where he is, *The Evening Wisconsin* to the contrary notwithstanding.

READER.

OPPOSING OPINIONS.

In order to keep our readers advised respecting the course of the German press of the state on the subject of the Bennett law we have given considerable space to translations of articles which have appeared in their columns.

In this morning's paper will be found two such articles expressing opinions diametrically opposed. The *Medford Waldbote* heartily approves the law, and declares that it is both the right and the duty of the state to exercise supervision over all schools. The *Milwaukee Germania*, on the other hand, asserts that the managers of the German parochial schools possess the right of absolute control over them, and that it is an unwarranted interference with their right for the state to require that the children of its citizens shall be given an opportunity to receive instruction in the English language.

The gross unfairness of *The Germania* is shown by its attempting to convey the impression to its readers that Superintendent Thayer and Gov. Hoard consider all Germans opposed to the Bennett law as "ignorant blockheads." A great many Germans who are opposed to the law have not read it. *They have had no chance to read it in a German newspaper.* They have formed their opinions of it from the representations made by such unscrupulous papers as *The Germania*, which tells them it is an infamous law, favored by those who hate the German element of the population, who wish to destroy German schools and to banish the use of the German language from the country.

In the article copied elsewhere *The Germania* tells its readers that the people who support this law are a class "who only recognize as Americans those whose ancestors lived here during the revolutionary war." If there are such persons in this country we have never happened to encounter one of them. The editor of *The Germania* is himself too intelligent a man to believe the statements which he makes to his readers.

It is not surprising that a journal which descends to such misrepresentations should be opposed to any measure calculated to raise up readers who will not be dependent upon it for their knowledge of public affairs.

COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

To the Editor of The Sentinel:

Those opposed to compulsory education will find the example of Germany worthy of their attention. They will also find that Germany has no scruples about compelling the child to take his instruction in the elementary branches of education—at least in the German language, the language of the country. She does not encourage the study of other alien languages, nor spend public money foolishly for that object; but no sooner had she annexed Alsace and Lorraine, where the language then in vogue was mostly French, than Prince Bismarck decreed that German should be substituted for French in the schools. The same rule holds good in Poland and other outlying principalities owing allegiance to the German government. If it is the duty of the state to provide elementary instruction for all the children that grow up within its limits, it naturally follows that the lawful language of the state should be the tongue employed in the future citizen's instruction.

If a man is summoned to appear in court he ought to be able to read the document, and if he buys a farm he ought to be able to read the deed of it for himself in the language in which it is written and recorded. If compulsory education is a good thing for the child and the future citizen—the future governor or state officer it may be—it is certainly a good thing for the individual. Hence the earnest and serious educators in this and most other progressive countries have been in favor of following the example of Germany, and compelling the attendance of all children in the public schools for a portion of the year. In England, France, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Sweden and Norway there is compulsory education; and if those countries, in some of which suffrage is more restricted than in ours and less importance attaches to the intelligence of the people, consider enforced instruction imperative, how much more important is it here where all the avenues to promotion are open? It would seem to be the most reasonable thing that could be suggested, that if the people of a state voluntarily consent to tax themselves year after year for the support of public schools so that the future elector, citizen, office-holder and business man may be qualified for his duties, the instruction should be in the English language.

THE Rev. Father De Kever, a Catholic priest at Menasha, in an interview published in another column, says that the opposition to the Bennett law comes largely from those who do not understand it. He thinks it is an excellent law, and wishes that it had been enacted long ago.