

THE DOG-IN-THE-MANGER SECTS.

Cardinal Gibbons' petition to Congress asking for a reopening of the question of Indian contract schools has aroused the opposition of the Protestant press of the country. It will be remembered that Congress five years ago passed a law the object of which was to put an end to Government appropriations to these contract schools, most of which were conducted under Catholic auspices. This was accomplished by reducing the governmental appropriation twenty per cent. each year, so that now the schools receive nothing for their work of educating the Indians. Of course, this program was entirely pleasing to the Protestant missionaries, who discovered a dangerous union between Church and State when Catholic priests and nuns performed their labors among the Indians so well that they earned more from the Government than the Protestant Indian schools were entitled to. Then the Protestants were eager to discontinue the practice of receiving Government funds. It seemed that because they could not divide all these funds among themselves they were not willing that Catholic institutions should enjoy an arrangement with which they were satisfied so long as they got the most of the money.

Cardinal Gibbons, in the name of the Archbishops of the United States, now very properly asks Congress for a reconsideration of the action of five years ago. All he seeks is simple justice. He believes that if Congress hears all the facts it will be fair enough to decide that the Catholic Indian schools are entitled to more consideration than they have received. The Protestant press, however, is not willing to have a reopening of the case. Its sentiment is voiced by the Boston Congregationalist, which, in its issue of last week, says:

"Protestant missionary societies are awake to the

danger of possible action by Congress that will lead to fresh sectarian appropriations for Indian education. Cardinal Gibbons for the Roman Catholic hierarchy, has petitioned Congress for a reopening of the question, and Protestant missionary societies whose headquarters are in New York, have promptly met the demand with a counter petition to the Senate and House of Representatives, asking Congress to adhere to the policy of making no appropriation of money or property for the purpose of founding, maintaining, or aiding by payment for services, expenses or otherwise, any church or religious denomination, or any institution or society which is under sectarian or ecclesiastical control. The following able argument is advanced by the societies:

"Since 1892 all the great religious denominations hitherto receiving government subsidy, excepting only the Roman Catholic, have on principle withdrawn from the receipt of money from the United States for their work among the Indians. The Government, with great indulgence toward the Roman Catholic Church, while announcing its purpose to cease making any sectarian appropriations for Indian education, consented to decrease gradually the amount appropriated to the Roman Catholic Church by twenty per cent. each year, until at the expiration of five years, the appropriations should cease. The time fixed for the dissolution of copartnership between the Government and a church has now arrived, and the church to which special and unwarranted consideration has been paid, makes overtures for the renewal of the dangerous practice by the national government. * * *

"We not only protest against reopening the question of sectarian appropriations, now closed by Congressional action, but we petition that the general government now adopt a definite, permanent and uniform principle in accord with the spirit of the United States Constitution, for advancing education among the Indians on the basis of the American free common school system, in order that there be no departure from the American principle of keeping separate and distinct the functions of Church and State."

If one were to place reliance on all these fine phrases, such as "the Church to which special and unwarranted consideration has been paid," he would