sor shall accept the statement of or made on behalf of, any ratepayer that he is a Roman Catholic as sufficient *prima facie* evidence for placing such person in the proper column of the assessment roll for Separate School supporters, etc." It is alleged that under this provision of the law many Roman Catholics who prefer the Public Schools are coerced by their clergy into supporting Separate Schools, and we are charged with being parties to this coercion. Mr. Chairman, I cannot undertake to say whether the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church are coercionists or not; I have no reason to think they are; neither can I undertake to say how far they control their people in matters of this kind. But I do say that if any ratepayer goes before the Court of Revision and asks for proof that any Catholic desires to become a Separate School supporter, and the proof is not forthcoming in the form of a notice from the Catholic himself or his agent (I am now quoting the Act of 1863, which in this respect has never be altered), then such Catholic cannot be assessed as a Separate School supporter. It is not a matter of assent or dissent or coercion. (Cheers.) It is purely a matter of law, and without notice or its equivalent the status of the ratepayer cannot be interfered with.

It is said, however, thirdly, that His Honor Judge Sinclair decided that certain Roman Catholic ratepayers of the Town of Dundas should pay their taxes to the Separate Schools although they had given no notice to the Clerk before the 1st of March, as required by statute. But on what principle was this decision based? These men had for two years allowed themselves without objection to be rated as Separate School supporters—they had acquiesced in the act of the Assessor, and Judge Sinclair held that acquiescence was equivalent to notice, and in so doing he simply recognized a principle of law by which you could forfeit your title to every square foot of real estate you own. Instead of setting aside our interpretation of the law, it

CONFIRMS IT, AS FAR AS IT GOES.

It therefore follows (1) that the law still presumes every ratepayer to be a Public School supporter; (2) that no man can become a Separate School supporter except by his own act or the act of his agent, and you must remember in this case that agency was allowed under the Act of 1863; (3) that the assessment roll does not bind the Court of Revision; (4) that the only evidence by which the status of a ratepayer who desires to become a Separate School supporter, or vice versa, can be absolutely determined is notice by himself or agent, or, if I accept Judge Sinclair's decision in the Dundas case, the equivalent of such notice; (5) that this case has been held to be the law by the Attorney-General,