

ject to neutral (and therefore sectarian) schools, is an infringement of the divine and inalienable rights of conscience, to which no single individual, much less, any minority, large or small, should be compelled to submit in a country which boasts of enjoying "civil and religious liberty."

The trouble is that, with the extremist, whether Catholic, Protestant, or "national-unionist," reason, theory, even elementary justice and charity, the existence of systems other than his own, have, apparently, no appreciable weight. Such persons are, of course—speaking with all reverence—as God made them, and it is no man's part, could he so much as conceivably dare to quarrel with His handiwork. But it is the part of every man who loves God, charity, his country and his neighbour, to bring every fact to bear that can be adduced in support of a system which shall be just, efficient and practicable, yet, at the same time, and as the sole condition of justice, efficiency and practicability, not merely "religious" in any vague sense, or in the sense that teacher and pupils are of the same faith, but theological and "denominational" in the strictest sense of either term.

No apology is, therefore, offered for the somewhat lengthy quotations here following; quotations which, while taken from so standard a work of reference as the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*,¹ and therefore easily accessible, might not, perhaps, be sought for, in connection with the present school controversy, save by one who, like the present writer, desires to prove a particular point.

We assume, then, first, the weaknesses of our provincial systems of primary education, as above briefly detailed; next, the claim that, taking Canada as a whole, the population is either too strongly Protestant or too "mixed" to allow of a "confessional" system of state schools; and, lastly, that it is facts that count, and practical success in attaining the professed ends of education, not theories, however plausible or irrefutable they may appear to be.

Let the appeal to facts be made, by all means. Canada, as a Protestant, or "mixed" nationality, cannot and could never, as by any conceivable possibility—if the "facts" are as claimed—tolerate a system of primary (and secondary) education which has been in force, to all intents and purposes, for nearly two centuries—in Protestant Prussia, the leading state of an empire which ranks, surely, first among the great powers of the Continent of Europe. "State interference in education," says the authority

¹Vol. VIII. p. 522. Vol. XXII. p. 965.