

Your Lordship says, that our School System is unanimously and strenuously condemned by other Roman Catholic Bishops than yourself, and in proof, you quote certain Acts of the Provincial Councils of Baltimore, which, you state, have been sanctioned by the Pope; but I can find nothing in the acts quoted, which can be fairly applied to our Schools. As to the first of the Acts of the Provincial Councils of Baltimore, quoted by your Lordship, no proof can be adduced, that the operations of our schools in all past years, have exposed to great peril the faith and morals of the children of Catholic parents. In regard to the second of the Acts referred to, whatever may be said to the books introduced by public authority into some of the Schools of the United States to which this Act refers, no school book has been sanctioned by the Council of Public Instruction for Upper Canada, in which there is a paragraph that impugns the principles of the Roman Catholic faith, or erroneously interprets its dogmas, much less falsifies the facts of history, since the only series of books for use in our schools, are those which have been introduced into the National Schools in Ireland, with the concurrence of the lamented Dr. Murray, to whom your Lordship refers in just terms of praise and admiration. And in respect to the last Act quoted by your Lordship, (setting forth among other things, that the system of public education is so devised and conducted as to foster heresies, and gradually and imperceptibly fill the minds of Roman Catholic youths with the false principles of the Sectar-ies, and that the Priest must watch diligently lest such youth should read the Protestant version of the Scriptures, or recite the hymns or prayers of the Sectar-ies,) I remark, that our system of Public Instruction knows nothing of the different religious opinions which exist in the country; does not pretend to judge what are heresies, or what parties are heretics; nor does it favor one class of religious opinions more than another; nor does it require Roman Catholic children to read the Protestant version of the Holy Scriptures, or hear, much less "recite the prayers or hymns of the Sectar-ies;" although I know of Roman Catholic schools, the authorities of which, require Protestant youth attending them to be present at the recital of Roman Catholic prayers and hymns, and alleging, at the same time, that there is not, nor shall there be, any interference with the religious principles of such youth.

Your Lordship quotes the words of the late Dr. Murray, late Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, who, referring to the former School system in Ireland, under the direction of a body called the Kildare Place Society, says, "it was required that in all the Schools for the education

of the poor, the sacred Scriptures, without note or comment, should be read in the presence of all the pupils of the Schools;" and you then ask me if this is not the case in our Mixed Schools? I answer, it is not the case. We have no regulation that requires any book whatever to be read before all the children of any one of our Mixed Schools; nor does our School law permit any School authority whatever to require the attendance of Roman Catholic or Protestant pupils at the reading of any book, or the recital of any hymn or prayer to which the parents or guardians of such pupils shall object. Our Government does not assume, or pretend to the right of assuming, the power of commanding or prohibiting any portion of the population of Upper Canada in matters of religion; what it recommends in respect to moral example and instruction in the Schools, is common to all, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, Jew and Christian,—each and all of whom recognize the Ten Commandments; but as to religious instruction, it is left to the discretion of the parties and parents concerned in each School Division; for, as Jehovah does not authorize any one human being to lord it over the faith of another human being, but makes every man personally accountable, and therefore gives him an equal right with every man to judge and act for himself in the matters of his eternal salvation, so our law does not permit any parent his child to be lorded over by others in matters of religious faith, instruction, or devotion.

Your Lordship further quotes Dr. Murray, in saying that he and the other Roman Catholic Bishops in Ireland, most earnestly resisted the former (Kildare Place) system of poor Schools in Ireland, and at length prevailed upon the Government to establish another (the present National) system which would be more acceptable to the Roman Catholics. Now, the very system which was thus established in Ireland in regard to books and religious instruction, and which Dr. Murray supported to the end of his life, is that which is established in Upper Canada, as I stated in my last letter to your Lordship, as may be seen by comparing our general School regulations* with those which Dr. Murray, and other members of the National Board of Education, have established in Ireland,† and which I quoted at length in my correspondence on the School Law of Upper Canada, printed in 1850, by order of the Legislative Assembly, (a copy of which was sent you) pages 52 and 53. Therefore, if your Lordship followed the example of the incomparable Dr. Murray, as well as that of the late Bishop Power, you would give your cordial support to a system of Schools

* See Appendix, No. 3.

† See Appendix, No. 4.

which
disguis

In re
Cathol
by your
offer:
State o
or give
a clas
either
referred
in Up
of any
an Am
the one
bishop
and the
Maryl

Wh
school
are wh
establi
persua
their
paying
erectio
of the
believe
Council
sition
to pub
very p
When
on g
Bishop
tain p
arrest
being
Catho
Schoo
kind,
Schoo
prese
Free
with
sing
Cana

"
count
been
the co
sense,
our sy
the pe
the cl
meet
sioner

† A
val of
exten
up."