

Principals of Separate Schools, under ecclesiastical approbation, in preparing their pupils for the semi-annual High School entrance examinations, and the pride they take in their success; as witness too the recent affiliation of a prominent Catholic College with the State University, heralded by the press as the beginning of a new era, which is to behold the demolition of those barriers, erected in barbarous ages, that have divided a Christian community, and kept one portion—needless to say which—in comparative ignorance and consequent inferiority. Satisfactory the Separate School Act is so far as it goes, but as it does not go far enough, Catholics themselves are beginning to question the wisdom and usefulness of its application at all. Some inquire, and with good reason: Where is the use in laying solid foundations of religion and morality in Separate primary Schools, and then permitting the erection of a shaky superstructure, open on all sides, and exposed to every wind? Others ask: If our Catholic youth, in their teens, can, without prejudice to faith and morals, attend a non-sectarian or godless High school, or, later on, follow the science lectures of a University Professor, with tendencies, more or less marked, towards materialism, where is the danger in the primary Public Schools, where revealed Truth is not questioned, and the pupils being of more tender years there must, in the very nature of things, be a lesser tendency and fewer incentives to immorality? These and like objections are not local but general. They are words of warning which tell us, plainly enough, that if the Act relating to Separate Schools be not extended to higher as well as primary education, it will before long, because of its incompleteness, become a dead-letter. We have only ourselves to blame for its present limitation, and need fear no opposition if we ask for it a wider and fairer field. The prejudices we had to encounter years ago in our struggle for the recognition of the principle of Separate Schools are almost entirely removed; the spirit of the community in general is far more tolerant and more just; and the good feeling existing between different classes is so strong and so prevalent that no politician, however cunning and unscrupulous, can succeed in disturbing it to any purpose. There is besides just now an evident disposition among Public School supporters to go into a thorough examination of the whole educational system. *Bystander* well represents this disposition when he says: "No want of respect either for the founders or the administrators of the present system, no disparagement of its general fruits, is implied in saying that it is in some measure experimental, and that the time for reviewing the results of the experiment may have come. Still less do we mean to betray any want of loyalty to the general principle of popular education, the sheet-anchor of democratic institutions. The growing expense is the least serious part of the matter, though it demands attention on grounds not of economy only, but of justice. By nature every man is bound to find proper education,

as well as food and clothing, for the children whom he brings into the world; and if, from considerations of policy, the duty is assumed by the community, and the expense of discharging it cast upon the taxpayer, it ought to be kept strictly within the limits traced by the exigencies of the state; if it is not, there will some day be a revolt against the school tax altogether. But the more important question is whether the course of instruction at present established in our public schools is the most judicious? Are the brains of children over-taxed, as some medical men declare? Are subjects included in the programme which cannot be thoroughly taught, or which are practically useless? Are children set, by over-education, against the callings of their parents, and made ambitious of entering others which they fancy more worthy of educated persons, but which are already over-crowded? A Commission of Inquiry would not be premature, and might be of use, at all events, in dissipating misgivings, if they are unfounded, and assuring us that we are in the right path." While they are moving for investigation and inquiry into suspected abuses, is surely an opportune time for us to prepare the way for legislation to remove glaring disabilities.

What these disabilities really are will appear from the following memorandum of the Minister of Education, explaining the relation of Separate School supporters to High Schools and Collegiate Institutes under the law:—

"(1) The Act of 1863 (now Rev. Stat. c. 206) has reference only to the system of common (now public) schools. The common school system at the time of passing the Act of 1863 was quite separate and distinct from the grammar schools, which are represented now by the high schools. In settling the question with respect to the establishment of denominational schools, the common or public school system alone was effected, and the grammar or high schools continued to be open to all pupils without any distinction. (2) Under provisions of the law as it formerly stood, a union could be formed of public and high school boards, under which they could occupy in common the same building, and get the benefit of the same or of some of the same teachers, and otherwise share in common the cost of maintenance of some of the public and high schools. The Act passed in 1874 continued the union of public and high school boards then existing, with power to dissolve it; but such unions were prohibited for the future. This union of the public and high schools causes a difficulty in the working of the provisions of the Separate School Act of 1863, inasmuch as the separate school supporters are entirely exempt from any rates for public school purposes, or for any debts incurred for such purposes. (3) The separate school supporters are entitled to be exempt from any rate which is intended to be applied for public school purposes, but this exemption does not apply to assessments properly for and intended to be confined to high school purposes, so that in cases where the by-law proposes to raise money for high school purposes exclusively, the separate school supporters would be liable, equally with all other rate payers; but where the assessment is to provide for the maintenance or erection of a union