

The Roman Catholic population between 1885 and 1891 was 13½ per cent; the school population in 1889 was 23,214.

Of course, it is not definite or positive, but relatively. The school population of the Catholics, according to that proportion, 13½ per cent, should have been 3,017, whereas they actually drew on a population of 4,364 or 19 per cent.

Mr. GILLIES. How could that be?

Mr. McCARTHY. Because they made the census themselves.

Mr. GILLIES. That is improbable.

Mr. HAZEN. Was it the provincial census?

Mr. McCARTHY. The school law required them to make a census every year, and the distribution was based on that census.

Mr. LaRIVIERE. Is the hon. gentleman aware that these census returns were duly sworn?

Mr. McCARTHY. I suppose so; but it is so, that does not make the matter much better.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). The hon. gentleman's observations are an attack on the board of management.

Mr. McCARTHY. Yes; before we overturn, before we overrule, before we undo what was done by the Manitoba legislature, I want, if I can, to possess the House of the facts which were before the legislature, and upon which that body arrived upon the conclusion that it ought to abolish the separate schools of 1870 or 1871. It was not only that, but, as I have said before, illiteracy prevailed. Now, I give Mr. Sifton's evidence on that point, also:

The separate schools, as conducted prior to 1890, were simply indefensible from an educational standpoint. The public money was in fact used to support the church. The schools were conducted in a manner that would be a disgrace to any civilized country. It was found that in the districts where the separate schools were in existence, they were conducted in a manner that would be a disgrace to any civilized country. * * * It was found throughout the districts where the separate schools were in existence that the priests and the members of the Roman Catholic clergy of one kind and another connected with the various orders which they have in that church * * * that these gentlemen were teachers of the schools in a large majority of cases and yet they were actually the parish priests. That while they were conducting the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church they were at the same time the teachers of the Roman Catholic schools. It was found to be a common thing that while these gentlemen were drawing money as Catholic school teachers that in their districts school would be kept open for a week or two weeks or three weeks or that the school would be open for only two days in the week. It was found that actually the system of education which was followed in separate schools was no system at all.

What was the result? It was what we might naturally expect, absolute illiteracy, public money wasted, large sums of public money taken from the people themselves by a direct tax, large sums taken from the Government grant, and all with this unfortunate result. These instances are given:

Petition re change in Boundaries of Elm River municipality. Twenty-eight names on petition (4 English, 24 French or half-breeds.) English all sign their names. Eighteen French or half-breeds sign by mark.

Petition for bridge over Turtle River. Fifty-four names on petition (French and half-breeds). Twenty-four out of 27 half-breeds sign by mark.

Add to these the well authenticated case of a petition presented to the legislature by the reeve and councillors of a municipality, one of whom signed his name, while five signed by mark.

Petition from municipality of Montcalm re destruction of diseased animals. Seven names on petition (all French). Three sign by mark.

Petition of residents in St. Vital re placing certain river lots in municipality of Cartier. Twenty-two names on petition (all French or half-breeds). Ten sign by mark.

Petition asking that Grande Point Settlement be declared part of the municipality of Taché. Twelve names on petition (all French or half-breeds). Five sign by mark.

Mr. AMYOT. Has the hon. gentleman the age of those who made their mark?

Mr. McCARTHY. The hon. gentleman asks me if I have their age. The province, I think, was about nineteen years old when this system had been established, and we had been told—or else I have misread history altogether—that prior to that there had been efficient Catholic schools kept up by voluntary system. We have been told this gave the right to this separate school system after confederation, so that I do not know it would help us very much to know the age of these men who made their mark. Now, these were some of the results. Well, they inquired also into the system of education. Remember, it was all in the hands of this school board. And the head of the school board was the Archbishop, and the different priests were members—it was wholly in clerical hands. All teachers were ecclesiastics or members of some order connected with the church. And the result of the teaching at these schools may be given in a few words. In the 2nd, 3rd and 4th divisions, the history taught was confined to Old and New Testament. In the 5th division—there were seven divisions in all—the history of Canada under the French regime. In the 6th and 7th, British and British-Canadian. And I may just give you the following, as an example of British history:—

As to English history, instruction in that branch, seems to have been regarded as a farce. A perusal of the examination papers set for first-class certificates will show that the questions set in history were exactly the same in 1880, 1881 and 1882. Those of 1884 were the same as those of 1883. The only question asked