

has more than once endangered the existence of cabinets. That it does not secure positions of importance in proportion to its numbers can scarcely be doubted. This also has its cause. The spirit of bigotry is dead in so far as standing in the way of political preferment. No man in Ontario is *à la mode* in the background solely on account of his religion. With us the spirit of toleration is widely spread. If the church to which I refer has not the position that its numbers deserve, it is owing to lack of the power which education gives. It has stood aloof from our national system. It has avowed itself a firm supporter of the denominational system and only accepted the national institutions when circumstances made it impossible to displace them.

As a result, its influence is lowered by reason of its inferior educational status. Such comparisons as I have here alluded to are frequently made, and if the facts justify them, they furnish incontrovertible proof that a church gains by supporting the national system, and loses when it undertakes an expenditure for sectarian schools and colleges.

I have now fully stated what I regard as the true attitude of the church with respect to the question of education. Its position should be one of harmony and fostering care. The principle of moral and religious truth should guide our educational authorities just as it should guide the actions of all who assume responsibilities for a nation that acknowledges the necessity of religion. Our schools and colleges are not religious institutions, but they are the institutions of a religious people. We do not write God in the constitution, but we engrave His name on the tablets of our hearts. If the governments that have ruled our country cannot be called Christian, they have been the administrations of a Christian people.

We cannot sufficiently eulogize the character of our public schools. We cannot estimate, much less can we exaggerate, the good they have done. Over hill and dale their sweetly chiming bells ring out a joyful welcome to the rich and the poor alike. Above their portals, carefully chiselled, is the one simple, but comprehensive word, "Equality," the hope and talisman of the nation. For what has been accomplished, let us be thankful; for what may yet be accomplished, let us be earnest. Of one thing I am certain—and that is that the people of Ontario, however they may differ among themselves, will yield none of the guarantees and constitutional sanctions that have given a high moral tone to our national schools. While "*Nulla vestigia retrorsum*" becomes our motto, let us relax none of our vigilance. I have no sympathy with those who contend that the State should discard religion in framing its laws. With no such spirit did so eminent a jurist as Judge Story limit his interpretation of the constitution of the United States. The magnificent periods of Daniel Webster, in the celebrated Girard Will Case, fully reflected the sentiments of the American people in declaring themselves a Christian nation. Canada is certainly not behind the neighbouring republic in its recognition of the province of religion. The teacher who thinks his position in the school is one of indifference towards religion has failed to make himself acquainted with the spirit and even the letter of the law. The man who teaches any other morality but that founded on broad Christian doctrine violates the school regulations as much as he would by neglecting instruction in English grammar. The infidel in charge of a school is an intruder and a dishonest person as much as the minister who preaches a doctrine he does not believe. We pride our-