

saying, with a writer in the *Catholic World*, that "the contact the children have with one another in the Common Schools is so slight and superficial and short-lived as to be unworthy the exaggerated emphasis now put upon it." If this be so, much of the argument for Separate Schools on the ground of their power to form character has evidently disappeared.

3. It is believed by Protestants and admitted by many Roman Catholics that the teaching in Separate Schools is generally inferior to that of the Common Schools. It is within our knowledge that not seldom would Roman Catholic parents, on this account, be disposed to prefer the school whose teachers possess the higher qualifications, and which, in its proper educational character, has the better vouchers.

4. In the minds of Roman Catholics the preceding considerations could not be expected to have weight should it actually be found that the faith of their children was tampered with in the Common School, or that a system of proselytism prevailed. But, so far as we are aware, no such thing is alleged. The Roman Catholic children attending Common Schools are to those attending Separate Schools as five to three; so that were there any disposition on the part of Protestant teachers to assail or undermine the faith of Roman Catholic pupils abundant evidence of the fact would be to hand.

These are some of the considerations—imperfectly stated—which must be weighed in relation to Separate Schools; and our conviction is that, whether we have regard to the interests of education or to the freedom of provincial legislation, the great majority of enlightened citizens must contemplate with little satisfaction the clauses in the British North America Act which deny us the right to deal with an important branch of the subject of education. Even should the Province of Ontario not desire to repeal the Separate School law such action should lie within its competency. In the Maritime Provinces there is no Separate School system; why should Ontario be forced to perpetuate an arrangement to which the majority of its people were always opposed? No thoughtful man can well regard the present state of things as a satisfactory solution of an educational difficulty; and no denunciation of those who would disturb the Confederation settlement can prevent so vital a question from being fully considered.

That Roman Catholics must not be under disabilities in Ontario any more than Protestants in Quebec is sufficiently clear, and no educational system which would infringe upon perfect religious liberty can be sanctioned in any province of Canada. The right of appeal to the Governor-General, which minorities at present have, must remain. Nay, the entire power of the Dominion is the proper guarantee for equality of dealing on the part of Provinces with the adherents of the various Churches, and nothing beyond this should be sought.

We are not here required to delineate the arrangements which should be adopted by Ontario should the Provinces become invested with plenary powers to deal with education, and should