

Manitoba School Case.

At the present time we gladly welcome in the short prayer and the reading of Holy Scripture, an acknowledgment of the need of the divine guidance and blessing and of the need and place of that divine word, that should be the lamp to our feet and the light to our path. There is also the learning and teaching of the Ten Commandments, as the divine foundation of moral instruction.

Now, what would be the meaning of the exclusion of these and the secularizing of the schools thereby? Surely not merely the loss of these important advantages, but the exclusion from instruction of every allusion to God or what could touch religion in fact or history. It would be, I dare to say, impossible to teach English literature at all adequately on such terms, yet contrary to the spirit and intent of the law to act otherwise.

And what reason can be given for secularizing the schools?

They will not be more satisfactory to the Roman Catholics. The religious services are in no true sense Protestant. There never was in the Protestant schools under the old system any instruction properly to be called Protestant. There was immeasurably less religious instruction than in the board schools of London, yet Cardinal Vaughan and the most of the Roman Catholic clergy supported the candidates favourable to such teaching in preference to those advocating the secularizing of the schools.

No doubt such schools are not satisfactory to Roman Catholics but the reason is that no schools can be satisfactory to them that are not taught by teachers of their own communion and that do not give religious teaching according to the requirements of their church.

So the only effect of secularizing the schools will be to make them more obnoxious to the Church of England and many others, while no satisfaction will be given to the Roman Catholics.

The Church of England here unites in feeling with the judgment recorded by the General Synod of the Church of England in the Dominion of Canada at its meeting in Toronto in September, 1893.

“Religious teaching in our public schools is absolutely necessary in order to fulfil the true purpose of education and to conserve the highest interests of the nation at large.”

We are not indifferent then to the happy circumstances of so many national schools in England in which there is definite religious instruction; but recognizing the difficulties in the way of this in the circumstances of this province, we should rejoice in such an amount of non-sectarian religious instruction as is allowed in the board schools in England.

I wish then on the part of the Church of England to enter the strongest protest against any proposition to secularize our public schools—while at the same time we cannot but deprecate the granting of privileges to the Roman Catholic body not shared in by other religious bodies.

I am faithfully yours,

R., RUPERT'S LAND.

EXTRACT from a Report of the Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency on the 7th July, 1894.

On a memorandum, dated 3rd July, 1894, from the Minister of Justice, recommending that a copy of the accompanying memorial of His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Quebec, and the Archbishops and Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church in Canada, regarding education in Manitoba and the North-west Territories, be forwarded to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-west Territories.

The Committee submit the same for Your Excellency's approval.

JOHN J. MCGEE,
Clerk of the Privy Council