

dation of a non-political superintendent. I do not believe in the indiscriminate denunciation one so often hears of—"one man power." One man power is in certain cases not only good but indispensable; such, for instance, as the management of a great war, or to bring about some great national blessing as Bismark has done in uniting Germany, and as our own Cromwell did in rendering hereditary tyranny impossible in England. But one man power in a peaceable and settled community like ours, and in an ordinary branch of government like our children's education, transgresses all our ANGLO-SAXON instincts in favour of popular control.

The second or Quebec plan of two distinct sets of high and public schools under the control of a Cabinet Minister would, I think, except for its cost, satisfy both sides. If guarded by a conscience clause forbidding any child to be compelled to use any religious, historical or literary textbook of which his or her parent disapproved, the cost would not be increased, as Romish parents would, when not sufficiently numerous to maintain schools of their own, continue to pay their rates and send their children to our public and high schools. The hierarchy would be satisfied because whenever their people could bear the expense, they would have high schools of their own, and could thus keep their children apart from the contaminating influences of heretical text books and companions, while Protestants would approve of a system with which no priest nor bishop would henceforth have the slightest ground for interfering. But to make this separation effectual we must call our schools what they would then really be—Protestant, not Public Schools—and we must also legally disqualify Romanists as trustees—just as Protestants are now disqualified for the trusteeship of Separate Schools. Shakespeare was wrong when he asks "What's in a name?" And Rome has long known this, for on that unfortunate name of Common or Public Schools she, while permitting no interference in her own schools, bases her claim to protest against the instruction of the children of Protestants in the Bible and the history and literature of their fatherland in schools built and maintained by Protestant money.

The third course is, while preserving the responsibility to the Legislature, as a Cabinet Minister of the Chief of the Educational Department, to transfer many of his powers to county boards of trustees and teachers. We have far too much, as every teacher knows, of a dull, wooden uniformity in our present system of one set of text books and one set of papers for teachers' certificates throughout Ontario and far too little of adaptability to local circumstances and needs. Why should not boys and girls, the great majority of whom will be farmers and farmers' wives, learn something about agricultural chemistry and the preservation of our forests, even if they have to learn less about grammatical analysis? And why should not city and town boys learn subjects having some relation to the peculiar industry, either marine, mineral or manufacturing, of the locality. County boards, subject to departmental supervision, should regulate these matters, and should also select text books subject to the approval of the department. Such a system would get rid of the three chief evils of Departmental Rule: that unbending uniformity which crushes down all individuality; those disputes with publishers and charges, true or false, of favouritism in discussing which so much of the time of our Provincial Legislatures has been wasted; and last and best of all, that cutting and carving of our Bibles and histories in exchange for Romish votes, a form of bribery which seems to possess for politicians a fascination as irresistible as that which the offer of a bottle of whiskey has for a drunken voter of the lowest class.

Some, however, may ask: "Why not, as in the United States, abolish altogether these Separate Schools which are not only very inferior to the Public Schools, but are render-

ing the formation of our united Canadian people impossible?" Such persons forget that however desirable the abolition of Separate Schools may be in the eyes of all Protestants, and of those Roman Catholic laymen who think for themselves, yet that, guaranteed as they are by the British American Act of Confederation to Protestants in Quebec and to Roman Catholics in the other provinces, they cannot be suppressed except by an Imperial statute. No Dominion or Provincial legislation can abolish them; and as the Imperial Parliament considers that their maintenance was one of the essential conditions on which Confederation was founded, it is scarcely likely to withdraw the privilege unless petitioned to do so by an overwhelming majority of those entitled to them. That day is far distant, and can only be hoped for as the result of convictions on the part of a constantly increasing number of Roman Catholics that their children educated at these schools are worse fitted for the battle of life than those of their Protestant neighbours. When a majority of Romish parents entertain such convictions, and entertain them strongly enough and boldly enough to maintain them in spite of priest or prelate, then, and no sooner, will the end of Separate Schools be at hand. But Protestants cannot wait for this. We must act, and act at once, if we wish to keep the hand of the hierarchy from our Bibles and our books.

A. SPENCER JONES.

THE IRISH AGITATION.

The murderous agitation so long waged in Ireland, at last bids fair to be suppressed under the vigorous and thorough measures of the Imperial Government, through the instrumentality of our modern Cromwell, the undaunted and astute Irish Secretary—Mr. Balfour.

Few will doubt that but for the almost fanatical devotion of the people of Great Britain to their constituted idol Mr. Gladstone, as a consequence of the phenomenal oratorical powers of that gentleman, blinding, as it has done, the people generally, to the senseless and weather-cock-like attitude assumed by the poor old man of late years, things in Ireland would never have been allowed to attain their present dimensions of riot and disorder, anarchy and murder and incendiarism. It was almost incredible to assume it possible for a man of Mr. Gladstone's subtle, though ill ballasted, intellect, after an apparently honourable career as a public man, an Englishman and a statesman, and still apparently as magnetic in his powers of oratory as ever, to veer around suddenly upon a vital Imperial question, and to surrender every previous maintenance and conviction—and fully and flatly to contradict and controvert all other previous legislation and enforcement of law, without the most valid reason—which it was, of course, expected so profound and life long a statesman would in due course reveal.

Seeing, however, that so far from any such ultimate cause having as yet been disclosed, the people have at last arrived at the only common sense solution of the somersault it was or is possible to arrive at, to wit, a very sordid and shallow one—the mere attainment of office at any cost of self respect or Imperial disruption. That Mr. Gladstone would have been successful in this contemptible manoeuvre, but for the patriotism and devotion to principle of his most able colleagues, who with noble self abnegation, severed their most cherished political relations and party ties with unswerving resolution—refusing to accept the slavish and shameful moral fetters of "one man" dictation, and partisan subserviency, is beyond doubt. Let the names of Hartington, Bright, Chamberlain and Goschen be cherished in the manly hearts and affections of true Englishmen the world over, as are those of John Douglas and John Knox dear to Scotchmen, and Langevin, Chapleau and Caron to patriotic Canadians since their noble stand on the Riel issue.