

to be snatched from them by the rude hand of a party confident and ruthless in the knowledge of its power. Should the fears of the Catholic body in England be realized in the provisions of the measure soon to be introduced before the House of Commons, the state of Catholic schools will, at one stroke, be reduced to the conditions which prevailed more than thirty years ago.

Up to the year 1902, the Catholics, where they wished to have purely Catholic schools, were forced to build and maintain them entirely at their own expense, and besides this, they had to pay the same public school rates as their non-Catholic fellow-countrymen, which rates went to the support of schools to which, in conscience, Catholic parents could not send their children. When we consider that Catholics in England at that time came almost entirely from the poorer classes, we can appreciate the difficulties and hardships with which they contended so courageously for the sacred cause of Catholic education. The various sects of non-Catholics were contented to eliminate religion completely from the schools, or to give merely a few scriptural readings at the opening of the classes. With the movement, however, of a section of the Church of England towards higher ritualism, there appeared amongst the Anglicans a tendency to stand more aloof from the other Protestant denominations. A natural result of this was an agitation on their part to have purely Anglican schools. Fully alive to the advantages which a coalition with the Catholic body would bring about, they threw in their lot with them and agitated for a new system of educational management by which Catholics were to have State-recognized Catholic schools and Anglicans were to have schools in which their particular tenets were to be taught. This alliance was too strong to be resisted and resulted in the Education Act of 1902.

By this Act, which was not in the least pleasing to the Non-conformists, Catholics, where in sufficient numbers to form a school district, were allowed to have a school of their own, in which Catholic teachers were employed, where catechism and Catholic doctrines could be taught during school hours, and where the board of management was Catholic. A certain rate of government support was allotted to such schools. The Anglicans were provided for, in the matter of education, exactly as their Catholic brethren were. This measure, of course, met with great opposition on the part of the