

Accompanying the communication of Mr. O'Neil, submitted to your Committee, dated the 20th April, is a statement shewing that the whole number of Roman Catholic Schools in the City amounts to seven, embracing eleven teachers, one assistant, and 706 pupils. These include the Schools taught by "the Christian Brothers," and "the Loretto Female Schools." The cost of these as computed by the Roman Catholic Trustees, reckoning the same rate of expenditure as is required for the support of other schools, embracing Teachers' salaries, rent, and fuel, amounts to £1150. This is presented to the Board, no doubt, as a mere ground for calculation, but afford no proper data for the computation of the amount which the parties may legally claim for the support of the Separate Schools recognized by the Board.

In estimating the amount legally due to the Roman Catholic Trustees, assuming the School Fund to be the Government appropriation and an equivalent amount raised by assessment (which is the evident meaning of the Act); reckoning the total fund at £1000, and their proportion according to the average attendance as shewn by the official returns) about 1-14th the sum would be only £70. But assuming that the School Fund embraced the Government appropriation, and *the whole* of the local assessments for School purposes (which your Committee do not allow) the sum apportioned to the Roman Catholic Separate Schools, under the compromise of last year, exceeded not only the amount to which they were legally entitled, but the whole amount of the School tax, paid by the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the City.

From a recent return submitted to this Board by its Secretary, after much tedious investigation, the following facts gathered from authentic statistical documents, exhibit that the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the City, while reckoned at upwards of one-fourth of the population, contribute only about one-twelfth of the taxation. From the return referred to, your Committee find that the total *annual value* of the taxable property in the City amounts to £186,983 5s.:—of this the proportion held by Roman Catholics is £15,750 10s. The total nett amount of School tax for last year, at 2½d. currency, in the pound, was £1800: the nett proportion contributed by the Roman Catholic inhabitants was £156 10s. Were the sum thus contributed by the Roman Catholic inhabitants to be placed at the disposal of the Committee now superintending their Separate Schools—together with their legal share of the Legislative grant—the sum would fall short of £200:—last year the amount was rated by compromise at £220.*

While your Committee cannot too strongly repudiate the principle recognized by the present School Act, of giving a Legislative sanction to Separate Schools, without any just cause for their existence (as in Lower Canada,) they would seek most earnestly, but by other and better means, to guard the rights of every class in the community. Your Committee fear that to continue to carry out the principle that the State should provide means to inculcate sectarian religious dogmas in our Public Schools, will result, not only in the various Boards of Trustees being required, according to the plainest principles of political justice, to meet the demand of other religious bodies for the establishment of denominational Schools, but perhaps, even, in the entire destruction of our educational system.

Your Committee having reason to believe that some members of the Board regard the compromise of last year, relative to the Separate Schools, as having extended, morally into this: and having given their views upon the case at some length, while they cannot recommend an appropriation beyond that which the law evidently allows, deem it to be their duty to commit the adjudication of the amount to the whole Board.

All which is respectfully submitted.

J. LESSLIE, Chirman,
WM. McMASTER,
D. PATERSON,
WILLIAM SHEPPERD,
WILLIAM HALL.

* Referred to in the Correspondence, Letter VIII.