

THE PRESBYTERIAN.

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A movement has been begun in Montreal for the protection of Protestant interests in the all-important matter of education. If the reasons which present themselves to those who are acquainted with the subject are duly considered, it is not to be presumed that the movement will fail of its object. In proceeding to notice some of these reasons, it is to us obvious enough that, unless the sense of justice has taken its departure from the public mind, they must be felt to be of sufficient weight to obtain for the forthcoming demand for redress a prompt and proper respect.

1. The Protestant element in the population of Lower Canada is such as to render some degree of Protestant representation, in the management of educational institutions existing by law, only reasonable and just. The total population, according to last census, is 1,110,664, of which 942,724 belong to the Church of Rome, leaving 167,940, from which we may take off 7940, a liberal allowance for such as may not choose to call themselves Protestants. The result is that more than one-ninth of the entire population remains to Protestantism, having an interest in the just management of the Legislative grant for education, the impartial administration of the School Law, and the benefits dispensed by educational institutions throughout the country. Looking at the matter in this simple light, and considering the irreconcilable nature of Romanist and Protestant notions on many points pertaining to both the manner and the matter of education, we ask, is it a right thing that the latter should be without a corresponding representation in the Educational Department? We do not make it our business to bring charges against the existing Administration; but, believing as we do that good men must have their religious sympathies, and that they are entitled to respect all the more when they act according to their religious convictions, we say that as Protest-

ants we ought not to be content with less than as full a representation as we are entitled to, according to population, in the conducting of educational affairs. As far as our knowledge goes there is not, from the superintendent down to the messenger, a single Protestant in the Education office. The superintendent is pretty much his own master. Perhaps it is right he should be so, but we confess to a strong desire to see at least the ninth part of a Protestant chief working side by side. In that case there are some things which the public would be likely to know, and probably without the trouble of asking for the information, which at present is not possessed to a satisfactory degree, such for example as the principles on which the distribution of grants both ordinary and extra is made, and also the grants for school rewards and the support of the French and English Journals of Education respectively. We think it belongs to the fitness of things that there should be a Protestant ear for Protestant interests, and a Protestant will and power to attend to them.

2. The Protestant element in the population is not fairly represented in the taxation system for school purposes, as regards either the imposition or the appropriation of taxes. We have heard of a municipality in which the property of Protestants is valued and assessed at \$50,000, and that of Roman Catholics at about \$34,000, and yet the latter have six schools and as many school-houses, while the former are obliged to send their children to a rented room. We are informed that property held by companies is frequently taxed for the benefit of Roman Catholic schools, because the owners, being Protestants, fail to sign, as required by law, a dissent to enable Protestant schools to obtain the benefit. Even Protestant seigneurs must support Roman Catholic institutions. The public have recently been made aware, by judicial decisions, that Protestant non-residents are