

tion to population, ignoring the desires arising from conscientious scruples of shareholders. And yet objection is taken to the system of a vote of shareholders, because the minority might feel their conscientious scruples over-ruled by the majority.

Under the present law scruples of conscience are taken into account in the case of individuals, though they constitute members of Municipalities, and this indeed is the general principle of the law now in force, which is deviated from, when the several members of a Corporation (an aggregation of individuals) are supposed to have no conscience.

Scarcely any great work is now undertaken except by joint stock companies or syndicates. The advance of the country in wealth and importance depends on the joint action of men—rather than on individuals—but there can be no reason why men should lose their rights of conscience by the mere fact of their forming themselves into a Company.

Again the argument of the Roman Catholic Committee, that companies and associations are interested in the advantages which education must confer on society without distinction of religion or nationality, and that the profits realized by these associations is derived from the Catholic and Protestant population, seems to your committee to be inapplicable to the case in hand. All men of all creeds and nationalities as fellow citizens of the same state are interested in the education of the whole people. It is on this ground alone that taxation for Schools is held to be just, and the Common School system is the natural outcome of this state of things. Again all employers of labor, whether Catholic or Protestant, whether as individuals or joined together in partnership, or formed into associations or companies, expect to derive benefit from the people they employ without distinction of race or creed. Notwithstanding these facts, our law, which is in this particular expressly framed to suit the principles of Roman Catholics as to separate education, recognizes the rights of conscience in individuals in School districts and municipalities, but most inconsistently refuses such recognition, or any conscience clause in the case of commercial companies or corporations. The only justification of this is that there is a difficulty in ascertaining the wishes of the corporate body, or the association—whereas no difficulty is felt in the case of the individual. The principle should be the same in all cases—the application is the difficulty.