

The Separate School law is not of our creation. It was on the statute book at the time of Confederation, and it provides for separate schools for Protestants and for coloured people, as well as for Roman Catholics. Personally, I should be glad if the children of all denominations could be educated together. But some will have Separate Schools, and the making of some provision for them by law was defended by Dr. Ryerson when he was Chief Superintendent of Education. In common with many Protestants he regarded these schools either as unavoidable, or as doing less harm than, in smoothing the working of our school system, they did good. There were other Protestants who did not perceive, or did not at first perceive, either the necessity or the policy of having Separate Schools, and when these schools had to be sustained by Lower Canada votes the fact was specially irritating. The agitation against them, however, though for years kept up with vigour, was not successful, and when the scheme for confederating the provinces was under discussion, and our local affairs were to be left to our own control in the Province, any danger of encroachments by Roman Catholics against the Protestant sentiment of the country was so effectually removed that Mr. Brown, who had been the great opponent of Separate Schools, and whose journal was the "fearless exponent of Protestantism" according to the *Review* writer, felt it his duty to acquiesce in the continuance of these schools on certain conditions set forth afterwards in the B. N. A. Act. That Act provides that the power of a Provincial Legislature to pass laws was to be subject to the following among other restrictions:—

"Nothing in any such law shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools which any class of persons have by law in the Province at the Union. All the powers, privileges, and duties of the Union, by law conferred and imposed in Upper Canada on the Separate Schools and school trustees of the Queen's Roman Catholic subjects, shall be, and the same are, hereby extended to the dissentient schools of the Queen's Protestant and Roman Catholic subjects in Quebec."

Separate Schools in Upper and Lower Canada thus became by general consent a permanent part of the educational system of the two provinces. The Separate School law of Upper Canada, at the time of the Union, exempted the supporters of Roman Catholic Separate Schools from paying a school rate for the Public Schools. It provided, amongst other things, that every Separate School should share in the Legislative Public School grant, and in all other public grants, investments, and allotments for Public School purposes, now made or thereafter to be made by the Province or the municipal authorities (not including local as-