

been expected, came from the Roman Catholics. They argued that, since the Act of 1858 permitted instruction in Christian principles and allowed the Douay version of the Bible to be read by Roman Catholic children, this constituted a right to have denominational schools. As the Constitution of Canada secured to minorities any rights which they had enjoyed before Confederation, it was maintained that the Common Schools Act was unconstitutional because it deprived the Roman Catholics of the right to have denominational schools with government support. The matter was argued before the Supreme Court of New Brunswick, and before the Privy Council in England. In both cases the New Brunswick Act was upheld. In 1875, after the opposition had abated a little, a compromise was effected which made the Act more agreeable to the Roman Catholics. Under this arrangement the members of certain religious orders could qualify as teachers and the property owned by the Roman Catholic Church could be used by the Trustees for school purposes. All religious teaching was to be done outside of school hours.

Common Schools The old Parish Schools had never been graded, and one of the improvements in the Common Schools was evident in 1876, when there were 325 graded departments, being 25.5% of all the schools of the Province.

No uniform course of study had ever been pursued in the Parish Schools, and it was not until 1878 that one was prepared for the Common Schools. It came about in a curious way. The Act of 1871 provided that after five years from its inception, the Provincial Aid to teachers should be apportioned in part according to the class of license held, and in part according to the results of an examination conducted by an inspector. This scheme, called the Ranking System, was postponed until 1878. Before it could be enforced a uniform course of study for all the Common Schools was necessary, and it was first authorized in that year. The Ranking System came to an end in 1884.