

"The assessor shall accept the statement of, or made on behalf of, any ratepayer, that he is a Roman Catholic, as *sufficient prima facie evidence* for placing such person in the proper column of the assessment roll for Separate School supporters; or if the assessor knows personally any ratepayer to be a Roman Catholic, this shall also be sufficient for placing him in the last-mentioned column. (26 Vic., c. , s. 26, sub-section 3.)"

This amendment was passed unanimously like all the other Separate School amendments; it was disapproved by no one outside of the House any more than in the House, and until the time of the political cry of "No-Popery" in 1886 not a whisper of objection to the clause had been heard from any quarter. As I have already said the Hon. Geo. Brown, the great champion of Protestantism, was alive at the time, and he was taking an active interest in public affairs. Dr. Ryerson also was still living, and he never ceased to observe with interest all events connected with the Department of which he had been for so many years the chief superintendent. Neither of these distinguished persons suggested any objection to the amendment.

It is to this enactment of 1879 that our assailants think the most plausible objections can now be made from a Protestant standpoint. They declare this to be the very worst of our amendments. They say that it repealed by implication the enactment requiring the written notice as the condition of exemption; that the necessity for that notice had made a Roman Catholic free without any act of his to support a Public School when he wished; and that we deprived him of that freedom by repealing the clause. Opposition journals have been full of articles and letters to this effect, and their public speakers have been eloquent on the grave offence; and yet, so far from the law as to the notice having been repealed, we have actually re-enacted it three times since the B. N. A. Act. I shall give you the dates and shall name the Acts re-enacting it, so that no one can have an honest, intelligent doubt on the subject. We re-enacted it the first time in 1877, and it will be found as section 31 of the Separate School Act, R. S. O., 1877, c. 206, p. 2,143; secondly, in the Act consolidating the Separate School Law in 1886, c. 46, where it is section 41, p. 143; and thirdly, in the R.S.O., 1887, where it constitutes section 407 of the revised Separate School Act, p. 2,483 (chapter 227).

But it is said that, even if the provision as to the notice is still in force in point of law, the practice of the municipalities has been to assume the contrary, and to treat every Roman Catholic as a supporter of Separate Schools whether he has given the notice or not. I am responsible for the law only, not for an