

position. Leaving out the coloured schools as affording no special feature for our purpose, there are three sorts of elementary schools. The public school of no religion, the Catholic separate schools, and the Protestant separate schools for their churches respectively. The first of these is non denominational, the other two are denominational by statute law.

The law as it now stands, for instance in the rather Protestant Province of Ontario, is the result of a good many hard fought battles in which it was difficult to avoid religious strife. It would be impossible to do more than sketch the history of it here, and even were it otherwise, it is not a pleasant task.

In the year 1810 the Eastern and Western Provinces of Canada were united under one government. In population they were nearly even in point of numbers; one was British and Protestant, the other was Catholic and French. Responsible government, such as at present prevails in England, had just been secured, and the people were in a fair way towards governing themselves. One of the first Acts of the year 1811 was a School Law by which in rural districts separate schools, for either Protestants or Catholics, could be established; in cities and towns a joint board of trustees was supposed to be able to manage educational affairs. During the succeeding ten years a number of legislative experiments were made; in 1813 the Act was repealed as to Western Canada, and four years later an unsatisfactory Act was passed which in its turn was superseded by an Act of the year 1819. This latter one was never put in force. A complete School Law was enacted in 1851, but it was not for two years afterwards that the basis of the present law was constructed, nor till the year 1855 that anything satisfactory was reached. In the general election of 1857 the propriety of having separate schools was one of the chief issues at the polls, and the result was that the Catholic party from Canada East was in a position to rule the House.

The Catholic Separate Schools in Western Canada numbered sixteen in the year 1851, increasing during the preceding decade from a solitary school in 1811 to the number mentioned. In the succeeding decade, or rather in 1862, there were 109 schools with an attendance of 13,631 pupils. In 1863 the law was settled, such as with very slight modifications it exists at the present day. Under the Act of this latter year it was provided:

"Any number of persons, not less than five, being heads of families, and freeholders or householders, resident without any school section of any township, incorporated village, or town, or within any ward of any city or town, and being Roman Catholic, may convene a public meeting of persons desiring to establish a separate school for Roman Catholics, in such school section or ward, for the election of trustees for the management of the same."

The trustees so elected formed a body corporate, and had power to enforce and collect rates and contributions towards the support of the school, and they had and have all other necessary powers in that regard.

The Protestant and coloured separate schools are now brought into existence in this way:

"Upon the application in writing of five or more heads of families resident in any township, city, town, or incorporated village, being Protestants, the Municipal Council of the said township, or the Board of School Trustees of any such city, town, or incorporated village, shall authorize the establishment therein of one or more separate schools for Protestants; . . . and in every such case, such council or board, as the case may be, shall prescribe the limits of the section or sections of such schools."

The chief point of difference in the Protestant and Catholic schools is that in regard to the former there is this clause:

No Protestant separate schools shall be allowed in any school section, except when the teacher of the public school of such section is a Roman Catholic."

There is no corresponding clause to this in the Act as regards the Catholic schools. The supporters of the schools have to reside within a radius of three miles from the site of the school-house, otherwise, if not so situated, they can attend the public schools. So long as the separate schools exist they must be supported by those desiring to support them, but the Catholic can withdraw his support and allow his taxes to fall into the public schools.

The protection which the Separate School Act affords is of two kinds: it exempts from the public school tax and it secures a share of the public school fund. This is provided for by two sections.

Taking the Province of Ontario as a fair sample of the working of a denominational elementary school system a few statistics may be of some value. In round numbers the entire population is 2,000,000; the population between the ages of five and sixteen 500,000. The grand total of schools of every description reaches about 5300, and of this number 200 are Roman Catholic separate schools. The entire Catholic population is between one fifth and one sixth of the whole, and the school children upwards of 90,000.

The cost of pupils to the rate payer is shown to be less, and generally a good deal less, to the separate than to the public school supporter. Here is the cost per pupil for the year referred to:

	Counties.	Cities.	Towns.
Public schools	\$5.70	\$9.30	\$6.20
Separate schools	1.70	4.78	5.66

It will be seen from this that, while in rural sections the cost per pupil is much the same, in the cities, where the religious orders do the work, the expenses are kept nearly one-half lower than in the public schools. Out of a total number of 151 teachers, 218 belonged to religious communities.

(Here follows the clause of the B. N. A. Act governing Separate Schools):

It will be seen from this (the article concludes) how safe the Separate School Law is from any local encroachment. It stands with the Canadian Constitution, but it may fall with it. It is unaffected by local agitation or by local legislation in the Province, though it may be, and has been, amended at the instance of the proper authorities. Being a law for a "denomination," to use the word of the statute, no government would proceed to enact any amendment to it unless at the request of the heads of that denomination. This secures the law from any hasty or ill-considered changes, and leaves to the ecclesiastical authorities the proper guidance in educational affairs.—D. A. O'Sullivan, in *American Catholic Quarterly*.

FATHER HAND ON THE JESUIT QUESTION.

SERMON AT ST. MICHAEL'S CATHEDRAL ON SUNDAY LAST.

St. Michael's Cathedral was crowded to the doors last Sunday evening when Rev. Father Hand preached on the Jesuit Question. He took as his text:

"Why have the Gentiles raged and the people devised vain things? The kings of the earth stood up and the princes met together against the Lord and against His Christ." Psalm 2: verse 1-2.

After a short introduction he said:

It is not my purpose this evening to show that the members of the Company of Jesus are included in this beatification. ("Blessed are ye when they shall revile you and persecute you and speak evil against you, untruly, for my sake: be glad and rejoice, for your reward shall be great in heaven.") Day after day we find columns of foul calumnies and filthy libels against the good and saintly fathers in the journals of this city. Wild and frenzied harangues have been hurled from the pulpit like the burning embers from a forged furnace. Language, which must sound strangely in a place of worship, has flowed from lips that can only pollute the name of Jesus like the muddy freshets through the sewer channels. Men unaccustomed to control the animal appetites of the soul, unable to reason calmly, have ventured to offer to the public through the medium of the press and pulpit their heated opinions on the local question of indemnifying the Jesuit Order. It is one that concerns, if at all, very remotely the people of Ontario. However, some busy-bodies have been good enough to bestow their attention upon the management of Quebec affairs; they have brought the matter on the tapis, and are not slow in dealing out summary destruction to a measure that has given entire satisfaction to all parties and creeds in the Province of Quebec. I need hardly say that dense ignorance of the question at issue has been exhibited by the expounders of pulpit instruction and by the correspondents who have been inflicting their confused ideas in illiterate form on suffering subscribers to certain journals in this city. I may go further and state that few of those parties have exhibited an inclination to understand the principles of justice which underlie the restitution made to the Jesuits. It is a rather dry subject; one of an historico-legal character in