

WHAT WE HAVE TO PERSIST.

In maintaining our educational system we have to resist the opposition of the rulers of the Romish Church, who are the uncompromising foes of free unsectarian education. They are working by every means in their power for the establishment of separate schools in these Provinces by which the revenues of the country would be appropriated to the propagation of their peculiar doctrines. We most firmly object to conceding their demands on various grounds.

OBJECTIONS.

1. *It would be a tacit recognition of the right of the Church to rule the state and thus to a certain extent a subversion of our free constitution.* The demand for sectarian education is made and urged in the name of the Roman Pontiff, Pius the Ninth. Because he has settled the matter for ever, our law makers must forsooth mould their legislation into conformity with his wishes. So reason the chief advocates of Separate Schools. It is therefore plain that any other matter which he settles forever must according to these ecclesiastical rulers be conceded in the same way, no matter how much it may conflict with the rights secured to us by our free constitution. The demand is for absolute ecclesiastical control over education, and to the state is to be left the simple duty of providing the funds which are to be used for purely church purposes. In this way the office of the Government will become entirely subordinate to Roman ecclesiastics, as is very much the case at the present moment in the Province of Quebec. In fact according to this doctrine, the work of the State would be simply that of a mint to coin money or grind it out of the people for the purpose of supporting and propagating Roman Catholicism.

2. *It would be the virtual endowment of the Roman Catholic religion as the established church of this country.* Such an establishment is no doubt contrary to the spirit of our civil constitution, and many of us believe it to be a violation of perfect religious equality. Upon no principle of either justice or equity can it be shown that the Roman Catholics have any special right to favouritism, either in the making of our laws or the distribution of our public funds. To endow their schools by giving them public money as a sect to be applied to sectarian purposes is to make them here, what they are virtually in the Province of Quebec, the Established Church of the country. Such an invasion of our rights of religious equality we desire most strenuously to oppose.

3. *It would greatly increase the taxation of the country for educational purposes.* Schools would be unnecessarily multiplied. There

would be a proportionately large drain upon the provincial fund, the county rates, or the Local assessment, to defray the expenses of education. Many weak sections which are now able to support a school would be deprived of one altogether by the division of sectarian parties; and the money which they pay into the treasury or county fund would go to stronger sections. This in many cases has been the experience of Ontario. Our taxes are heavy enough without being increased; our schools are bad enough without being made worse. Hence we object to the attempt to saddle us with separate Roman Catholic schools.

4. *It would perpetuate sectarian strife instead of allaying it.* Giving the sop of favouritism may silence the clamant cries of disaffected parties just now, but will only whet their appetites for greedier demands by and by. Present compromise is just opening the door for future concessions. Romish ecclesiastical rulers can never consistently rest short of wielding supreme control over the Government and legislature of our country. The ground which we yield to them for the sake of peace will be used as a fulcrum on which to move the lever of power for wringing from us greater compromises than any we have yet made.

A SURVEY OF THE FIELD.

On these and similar grounds your Committee have endeavoured to the best of our ability to defend the public school system of these Lower Provinces from the fierce attacks of its avowed enemies. The war during the past year has been very general and in some cases very fierce and decisive. The battle has raged all along the line from the House of Commons at Ottawa to the City Council at Halifax. The blow which was aimed at the constitution last year by the notorious Costigan resolutions has been again repeated. Mr. Costigan during the last Session of the Dominion Parliament, introduced into that House a resolution, the purport of which was to deprive the Local Parliaments of these Provinces of the control of educational matters, which was definitely secured to them by the terms of Confederation. The highest legal authorities in the country declare that it is unconstitutional for the House of Commons to pass such a resolution. Notwithstanding this decision, the advocates of separate schools boldly support the measure and urge its adoption by the House of Commons. They would have no scruples in trampling on the sacred guarantees of the Constitution, and thus imperilling the very integrity of the confederacy in order to accomplish their purpose. Mr. Costigan withdrew his motion with the distinct understanding that he would renew it as soon as there would be a reasonable expectation