

The laws relating to education were modified from time to time, but the system of denominational education was maintained in full vigor until 1890. An act passed in 1881, following an act of 1875, provided among other things that the establishment of a school district of one denomination should not prevent the establishment of a school district of the other denomination in the same place, and that a Protestant and a Roman Catholic district might include the same territory in whole or in part. From the year 1876 until 1890 enactments were in force declaring that in no case should a Protestant ratepayer be obliged to pay for a Roman Catholic school or a Roman Catholic ratepayer for a Protestant school. In 1890 the policy of the past 19 years was reversed, and the denominational system of public education was entirely swept away. Two acts in relation to education were passed. The first (53 Vict. c. 37) established a Department of Education and a Board consisting of seven members known as the "Advisory Board." Four members of the Board were to be appointed by the Department of Education, two were to be elected by the public and high school teachers, and the seventh member was to be appointed by the University Council. One of the powers of the Advisory Board was to prescribe the forms of religious exercises to be used in the schools. The Public Schools Act 1890 (53 Vict. c. 38) enacted that all Protestant and Roman Catholic school districts should be subject to the provisions of the act, and that all the public schools should be free schools. The provisions of the act with regard to religious exercises are as follows :

6. Religious exercises in the public schools shall be conducted according to the regulations of the Advisory Board. The time for such religious exercises shall be just before the closing hour in the afternoon. In case the parent or guardian of any pupil notifies the teacher that he does not wish such pupil to attend such religious exercises, then such pupil shall be dismissed before any religious exercises take place.

7. Religious exercises shall be held in a public school entirely at the option of the school trustees for the district, and, upon receiving written authority from the trustees, it shall be the duty of the teachers to hold such religious exercises.

8. The public schools shall be entirely non-sectarian, and no religious exercises shall be allowed therein except as above provided.

The act then provides for the formation, alteration and union