

The interests and demands of our electors will oblige us to lay this matter before the Ontario Government in about a fortnight. We trust, that since our claim is based on parents' rights, a right ever defended by the Catholic Church, it may have in Toronto the support of the Catholic hierarchy of Ontario.

We have the honor to subscribe ourselves,

Your Graces' Most Obedient Servants,

(Sgd.) R. MACKELL,

Chairman English Section Ottawa Separate School Board.

J. F. LANIGAN,

Chairman Finance Committee Ottawa Separate School Board.

V.

OTTAWA, ONT., April 27, 1914.

MOST REV. CHARLES HUGH GAUTHIER, D. D.,
Archbishop of Ottawa.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE:—

The Ottawa Separate School question has now reached such a critical stage that English speaking Catholics are beginning to count the days of the Separate Schools in Ottawa. We wish to call Your Grace's attention to six factors, that have brought on the crisis, which threatens to ruin the Separate School System in Ottawa.

The first factor is largely an uncontrollable one: from the fact that the Catholic assessment is much lower than the Protestant assessment, the rate has to be much higher. This state of affairs may be relieved somewhat if the law relating to the School taxes of Corporations and public utilities be modified. But in Ottawa at least, there is no possibility of the Separate School rate being as low as the public school rate, even if the greatest economy were practised. This is the first handicap against the Separate Schools, but it is a handicap which if alone would be easily overcome, as it has been thus far.

The second factor is a local one and could be controlled by Your Grace; the violation of a past understanding to the effect that the English schools of the City should be controlled by the English Committee, composed of English Trustees, nominated and elected by English speaking voters; and the French (or bilingual) schools should be controlled by the French Committee composed of French Trustees, nominated and elected by French speaking voters. This was an essential part of the separation of 1886, and was again agreed to by Archbishop Duhamel, in 1906. This understanding is applied fully as regards the French schools; it is not applied as regards the English schools. The French priests and people have refused to abide by the understanding, and on April 25th, 1914, succeeded in defeating two English Trustees who had five-sixths of the English votes, thus increasing tenfold the racial bitterness in Ottawa. Indeed, French voters were urged from the pulpit to take part in these elections, by Father Jeanotte in January, 1914, and by the Priests of St. François and St. Jean Baptiste on April 19th, 1914. If French Parish Priests are going to tell French voters from the pulpit, either directly or indirectly, not to vote for the English speaking candidate who is acceptable to the majority of the English speaking Catholics, how are the civil and religious rights of the English speaking Catholics, which are thereby violated, to be respected? Only by Your Grace stepping in to forbid those priests this line of action, and in the interests of racial peace and in the interests of our Schools, commanding all concerned, priests and laymen, to return to the above mentioned understanding. We have elsewhere explained fully to Your Grace the necessity of partial separation and the extreme desirability of complete separation in the Board of Trustees of the English and the French Schools in Ottawa.

There is a third factor, a most disturbing one which could be easily controlled by Your Grace, and which we earnestly trust will be: we refer to the campaign of racial hatred and slander carried on by "Le Droit", a French daily newspaper published in Ottawa, edited by an Oblate priest of this Diocese, Fr. Ch. Charlebois, O. M. I. "Le Droit" consistently, especially during the past five months, carried on a campaign of slander against English speaking Catholic laymen, Priests, Bishops, and Cardinals, (the Cardinal Secretary of State himself being not exempted—See letter entitled "Une opinion non prévenue" published