

after enumerating certain duties of School Commissioners and Trustees, reads thus: "but the cure, priest or officiating minister, shall have the exclusive right of selecting the books having reference to religion and morals for the use of the schools for children of his own religious faith."

An actual case will illustrate the working of this part of the Common School Law of Lower Canada.

In a certain municipality in which a majority of the inhabitants, and consequently a majority of the school Commissioners, are Roman Catholics, there has not been since the organization of the town, until recently, a single "dissentient" or separate school, either Protestant or Catholic. The people of all creeds and nationalities have hitherto worked together in harmony. As is often the case, the Protestant minority have paid the greater proportion of the taxes for school purposes. New school houses have been built in all or nearly all the districts in the town. Good teachers have been employed, irrespective of their religious creeds, and both people and commissioners have, with singular unanimity, vied with each other in striving to keep sectarian and national differences out of their schools. To such an extent has this been the case, that in one instance where a Protestant teacher acceded to the request of the parents of two families—one Church of Rome and the other Church of England, and had for a few days been teaching the catechisms of these churches, that one of the school commissioners—a Roman Catholic—having learned of the introduction of this sectarian teaching into the school, waited upon the instructor and forbade her teaching catechisms in the school, either Catholic or Protestant.

The school commissioners, a majority of whom are Catholics, endorsed his directions to the teacher. Thus harmoniously and praise-worthily did the people of this municipality, when left to themselves, manage their common schools.

A new Roman Catholic Priest was sent amongst them. He informed his parishoners that the Bishop had directed him to have the children taught the catechism and other sectarian matters in the day schools; he appeared before the school commissioners and claimed the "*exclusive right*," *by law*, to introduce the Roman Catholic catechism, Catholic reading books, and such like, into all the schools in which the majority of the children were Catholics. (This would include all the schools in the municipality except *one*, or, perhaps, for a short time, *two*.)

On being informed by the school commissioners that there were no catholic or dissentient schools in the town, and that they did not want any; the priest replied that he was instructed by Mr. Supt. Chauveau to reckon every school in which a majority of the children are Catholics, a Catholic school;* and as therefore the law gave him the "exclusive right" of selecting and introducing what books he pleased on religion (sectarianism) and morals, he intended to exercise that power.

What will be some of the results? The Protestant minority will at once be driven out of all, or nearly all, these schools; for no parent who adheres to the "Reformed Church" will long send his children to a

* This arbitrary edict is doubtless illegal and ought to have been resisted.