

erection, rents, repairs, or furnishing of school houses of any description; all sums expended for these purposes in any Municipality must be raised by local voluntary assessment or subscription in such Municipality. The principle of the school law is, that each Municipality has a right to do what it pleases with its own; with what it does not receive from the Legislature; what it is not required to raise as a condition of receiving Legislative aid, but what it voluntarily provides within its own jurisdiction. But if according to your Lordship's advocacy, a Municipality must be compelled to tax themselves to provide separate school houses for religious persuasions, in addition to public school houses, there may be a high degree of "civil liberty" secured to certain religious persuasions, but a melancholy slavery imposed upon the Municipalities. The liberty of teaching, any more than the liberty of preaching, by any religious persuasion, has never been understood in Upper Canada to mean the right of compelling Municipalities to provide places of teaching, any more than places of preaching, for such religious persuasion. Such liberty, or rather such despotic authority, possessed by any religious persuasion, is the grave of the public Municipal liberties of Upper Canada.

Your Lordship has furthermore been pleased to designate Upper Canada—the country of my birth and warmest affections—"this sectarian country;" a term which not merely implies the existence of sectarianism, (for that exists in Austria and Italy as well as in Upper Canada,) but that such is the distinguishing character of the country, as we are accustomed to say an enlightened, a civilized, or barbarous country, according to the prevailing character of its institutions and inhabitants. I think your Lordship's designation of Upper Canada is an unmerited imputation; I am persuaded that a large majority of the people are as firm believers in "the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," and in all that our Lord and his Apostles taught as necessary to everlasting salvation, as either your Lordship or myself. A standard English lexicographer has defined "sect" as "a party in religion which holds tenets different from those of the prevailing denomination in a Kingdom or State;" and *Becherelle* in his noble "*Dictionnaire National*," says, after *Linguet* that "De toutes les sectes, il n'en est pas de plus furieuses, de plus intolérantes, de plus injustes, que celles qui choisissent pour cri de guerre la religion et la liberté."* But I see no application of either of these characteristics of sectarians to the majority of the people

whom your Lordship reproaches—a people, in religious morals, in honesty, industry, in enterprise, in the first and essential elements of a nation's civilization, in advance of the mass of the people of those very states of Italy to the schools of whose capital you have drawn my attention.

Your Lordship has represented "God as unknown to our schools as he was in Athens;" and by the passages of the scriptures which you have quoted, as well as by your remarks upon our school regulations, you intimate that I place earth before heaven, and the gain of the world before the loss of the soul. I remark, that I believe a majority of the members of the Council of Public Instruction, by whom the regulations were made for our schools in regard to religious and moral instruction, are as deeply impressed with the worth of the soul and the value of heaven, as your Lordship; and so far from God being unknown to our schools, the authorized version of His inspired Word (the text book of the religious faith of a large majority of the people of Upper Canada) is read in 2067 out of 3000 of them. And if the regulations are criminally defective in this respect, your Lordship as a member of the Council of Public Instruction, has had, and still has ample opportunity to propose their correction and amendment. Though I have perhaps learned, by personal observation and enquiry, more of both Irish and Canadian Schools than your Lordship, and am not sensible of the vast inferiority of Canadian schools of which you speak: yet if such be the fact in a religious point of view, the fault must lie with the clergy throughout the country, and not in the regulations, since our regulations are borrowed from those which have operated so beneficially in Ireland.* Who is to provide for, and look after the religious instruction of the youth of the land, but the clergy and the churches? Government was certainly not established to be the censor and shepherd of religious persuasions and their clergy, or to perform their duties. I lament that the clergy and religious persuasions of Upper Canada have not been more attentive to the religious instruction of their youth—the youth of the land;—but as to our youth and fellow countrymen in Upper Canada not being taught to respect law and authority, as in the schools of Rome, I may observe that authority and law are maintained among us by the people themselves, without our capital being occupied by foreign armies to keep the citizens from expelling their Sovereign from the throne.

Your Lordship draws a vivid picture of each of the children in a school being taught from a

* * Of all sects, those are the most furious, the most intolerant, and most unjust, who adopt as their war-cry: *Religion and Liberty*.

* See Appendix, Nos. 3 and 4.

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