

On these and other grounds which we might state, we set ourselves in opposition to the determined attempts of ecclesiastical rulers to break down our free unsectarian school system, and substitute for it the separate school system of either Ontario or Quebec.

WRONGS PERPETRATED.

We think that there is just cause for complaint against the Roman Catholic authorities for the mode in which they carry on their warfare against the educational institutions of the Lower Provinces. They would destroy the constitution of the country in order to bury free unsectarian schools beneath its ruins. They would use the power of Ontario and Quebec to deprive us of the rights sacredly guaranteed to us by the compact of confederation. And we feel that the conduct of those Protestants who for mere personal or party purposes aid and abet them in their unconstitutional attacks is in a very special manner reprehensible.

The Costigan resolution has been again before the House of Commons, and we are witnessed the humiliating spectacle of legislators who after spending many thousands of dollars to settle the constitutional question which secures the rights of every province over its own educational matters and which they fully endorse, nevertheless with strange inconsistency voting for a resolution which prayed for imperial interference with sacred provincial rights. And we are now told by the highest ecclesiastical authorities of the country that this process of worrying the House of Commons is to be continued by the political servants of the Church of Rome till the constitution shall be so amended that the free unsectarian school system of the Lower Provinces shall be broken down.

The new Province of Saskatchewan, contrary to the spirit of the constitution, has at ultramontane dictation been saddled with the burden of separate schools. The men who voted for this measure in order to prevent future trouble may find that they rebound the infant Province with ropes of sorrow which when it reaches manhood it will break with indignation aroused by the injustice which it has suffered. We cannot behold these encroachments on our constitutional rights without entering an emphatic protest against the law which permits such wrongs to be perpetrated.

THE FIELD.

In the Provinces of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island the struggle has continued during the past year with favourable results to the cause of free unsectarian education, and we cannot but

congratulate the people of these two Provinces on their possessing public men and secular newspapers that most ably defend and maintain the cause of constitutional rights and free education against the assaults of the enemies of social progress and of civil and religious liberty.

In Nova Scotia the subject has been discussed with gratifying results. The secret sapping process of the enemy has been to a considerable extent exposed and counteracted. Your Provincial Committee knowing the activity of foes, and the unreliability of those in power, endeavoured through the press, and by a republication of the Synod's resolutions, with explanation and appeal to arouse the free school sentiment of the Province, and with, they trust, such a measure of success as would warrant the farther energetic prosecution of the same course. Romish ecclesiastical influence is still felt acting very prejudicially upon the educational machinery of the Province. All political parties seem to vie with each other in their readiness to bid for the Roman Catholic vote, and are apparently prepared to sacrifice the interests of education on the altar of party. The discussion which has taken place during the past year has no doubt been instrumental in doing good. Several abuses referred to in our last report have been for the present corrected, but the political character of our Council of Public Instruction and the inefficiency of executive administration are felt to be great defects in the working of our system.

THE PRINCIPLE WE MAINTAIN.

Your Committee feel that the only sure and solid ground on which to stand in this educational struggle is on the principle of free unsectarian schools. The church that is now asking for a compromise of this principle will never rest short of complete supremacy over all our institutions. In self-defence we must make a stand against her demands at some point, and it is better for us to do so on the firm rock of principle than on the shifting sands of expediency. Unless we make up our minds to have our institutions modelled after the fashion of Quebec, or to have our history become the record of a second Spain, we must be prepared to maintain the legal equality of all churches, and defend our unsectarian institutions against the attacks of those who would strangle the spirit of liberty in order that they may wield the sceptre of despotic power. If a church or denomination as such presume to control the legislation and government of the country for its own aggrandizement, if it boldly attempt to move the secular arm to overthrow our constitution and deprive us of our religious rights of equality, if it boldly proclaim the doc-