

The Teachers, both male and female, were divided into three classes, with an appropriate allowance to each class from the Provincial Treasury, and with duties, as to the subjects taught, prescribed in the Act for each class.

It provided for a School Library in each District, by a money grant in aid of the amount raised in the locality for that purpose, and placed the selection of books under the control of the Board of Education; but expressly excluded works of a licentious, vicious, or immoral tendency, or hostile to the christian religion, or works on controversial theology. This is the only part of the law in which any thing of a denominational character is referred to in any way; and it shews how jealous the Legislature was in guarding the law, and in preserving the schools from any denominational or sectarian tendency. Provision was made for the education of the children of the whole people, in schools of every grade, and by teachers of both sexes; and by the Superior School, the wants of higher education were provided. The whole machinery of the Act is designed to make the schools common to the child of every man, irrespective of his religious opinions. The Act recognizes the agreement of the inhabitants of any locality with a teacher licensed by the Board of Education, when they have provided a sufficient school-house and secured the necessary salary, raised by voluntary contribution or tuition fee. It contains provision for voluntary assessment in the District, Parish or County where the rate-payers determine to adopt that mode of supporting the schools; and in such case the schools are declared to be free to the children of all the inhabitants.

The system is prescribed by the Board of Education; the localities take an active part in the establishment and government of the schools, subject to the general control of the Government.

The local agency is exercised, and the local officers appointed, in the same manner as for the government and support of the poor, the highways, or any other local or parochial object. Neither class, creed, nor colour, affect or influence the one more than the other. The only qualification for the electors of any officer is that they are to be rate-payers upon real or personal property, or income. No class or creed had, under the Act, any peculiar right, either in the general government of the whole Province, or in any Parish or school.

Now, when all this machinery for working the Act relating to Parish Schools had been made, is it not a striking proof of the determination of the Legislature to avoid the very thing which it is contended the Act authorizes; by restricting the power of the Board of Education to make Rules and Regulations in this respect, and expressly excluding from the School Libraries works hostile to the christian religion, or works on controversial theology; while it left the inhabitants free to elect their local agents, who should employ the teachers, and look after the schools. To secure to every man, and the child of every man, a just equality with regard to his religious faith, it enacted, in effect, that the great leading principles of christianity should be inculcated in the schools; but there should not be in the Library a book upon controversial theology, or, in other words, with denominational teaching.

What sort of denominational school would that be, where the master would not be aided in his dogmatic teaching by the writings of men of his own faith? When a denominational school is established, how strictly this is provided for. Take any one of the Acts on our Statute Book, and examine its provisions. I will refer to the Act incorporating the Trustees of the Wesleyan Academy at Mount Allison, Sackville, (12 Vic. cap. 65); the 11th section is as follows:—

“No person shall teach, maintain, promulgate or enforce any religious doctrine or practice in the said Academy, or any department thereof, or in any religious service held upon the said premises, contrary to what is contained in certain Notes of the New.