

reverend gentleman, I think belonging to my own church, saying that he hoped the day would arrive when one common ground of education could be reached, and when some form of religion could be taught in the schools upon which all could agree. Well, Sir, if there was any hope of reaching that state of affairs, I would be very glad. But we have been nearly a hundred years in trying to agree upon that point, and we do not seem to be any nearer to it to-day than we were then. I find that in 1854 there was a separate school law in the province of Ontario; I find that they repealed it and in 1863 they put it again on the statute-book, and they now have separate schools in the province of Ontario. Seeing that neither in Quebec nor in Ontario can the present system be changed, it seems to me there is not much hope of being able to do away entirely with the principle of separate schools. Now, this very point was considered by the Privy Council, as will appear on page 485, volume 5, of Cartwright's Reports. They ask the question why it is that Catholics cannot agree to this common school education? And they answer it in this wise:

It is owing to religious convictions which everybody must respect, and to the teaching of the church that Roman Catholics and members of the Church of England find themselves unable to partake of advantages which the law offers to all alike.

Dealing with the same subject the Privy Council, at page 187 of the same volume, says:

As a matter of fact the objections of Roman Catholics to schools such as alone receive state aid under the Act of 1890 (Manitoba Act), is conscientious and deeply rooted. If this had not been so, if there had been a system of public education acceptable to Protestant and Catholic alike, the elaborate enactments which have been the subject of so much controversy and consideration would have been unnecessary. It is notorious that there were acute differences of opinion between Catholics and Protestants on the education question prior to 1870. This is recognized and emphasized on almost every line of these enactments. There is no doubt either what the points of difference were, and it is in the light of these that the twenty-second section of the Manitoba Act of 1870, which was throughout a parliamentary compact, must be read.

Dealing with the same question further on their Lordships say that the argument urged by some people in favour of common schools is that they suit both alike. To this we cannot agree, as our Roman Catholic friends cannot accept them as doing justice to their views in respect to religious education.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is no strong reason, from a personal standpoint, why I should not be just as well satisfied with separate schools or with public schools as any other gentleman in this House. But I have this to say, that the experience of

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many years in close touch with the public schools of the province from which I come, has taught me that there is no use in trying to force upon any people a system of education with which they are not satisfied. Now my own position on the question is this: I am in favour of the most absolute and thorough government supervision and control of all schools receiving government grants or municipal aid. I am strongly in favour of the teaching of the principles of the Christian religion in schools. I am firmly convinced, after many years of active experience, that the teaching of religion cannot be successfully and harmoniously conducted in a mixed school attended by Roman Catholics and Protestant children together. I am a firm believer in the divine injunction: 'Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.' I believe it is the duty of the state to see that as much as possible the cardinal principles of the Christian religion are thoroughly instilled into the youthful minds of the nation. I believe that this all-important purpose can only be accomplished by Protestants of all classes agreeing upon a certain line of religious instruction in all Protestant schools.

I believe that the Roman Catholics of Canada are doing the right thing when they insist upon the teaching of their children in the religious principles of their church. Our Protestant friends say that there is no religious teaching in our national schools and it is as good for your children as it is for ours; that is quite true, and that view is worthy of some respect. But, our Roman Catholic friends say: We know that what you say is true and we know that our children will not be in any way interfered with in the common schools. But that is not enough; we want our children to receive religious instructions every day in the school and we want those instructions to be guided and inspired by the teachings of our church and we want the instructions imparted by a person who understands and believes in them. This, as I understand it, is the position of our Catholic people in Canada and it is one, particularly from their standpoint, that commends itself to me, and one which I most cheerfully commend to the Protestants of Canada. As one who has been for the last twenty years in close touch with the public schools of the province of Nova Scotia, I take the responsibility of telling my Protestant countrymen that they cannot be too soon in following the example of their Roman Catholic brethren in insisting upon religious teaching in every school of the land.

That is the position which I take in respect to religion in the schools. I believe it is the proper thing to have it and if we must have separate schools in order to have religion in the schools let us have separate schools. If we can have them together, all