

EDUCATION

the Queen's Roman Catholic subjects shall be, and the same are hereby extended to the dissentient schools of the Queen's Protestant and Roman Catholic subjects in Quebec.

(3) Where in any province a system of separate or dissentient schools exist by law at the union or is thereafter established by the legislature of the province, an Appeal shall lie to the Governor-General in Council from any act or decision of any provincial authority affecting any right or privilege of the Protestant or Roman Catholic minority of the Queen's subjects in relation to education.

(4) In case any such provincial law as from time to time seems to the Governor-General in Council requisite for the due execution of the provisions of this Section is not made, or in case any decision of the Governor-General in Council on any appeal under this Section is not duly executed by the proper provincial authority in that behalf, then and in every such case, and as far only as the circumstances of each case require, the Parliament of Canada may make remedial laws for the due execution of the provisions of this Section and of any decision of the Governor-General in Council under this Section.

The purpose of these sections was to preserve to a religious minority in any province the same privileges and rights in regard to education which it had at the date of Confederation, but the provincial legislatures were not debarred from legislating on the subject of separate schools, provided they did not thereby prejudicially affect privileges, previous to Confederation, enjoyed by such schools in the province.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AND EXERCISES IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Under the powers conferred by the above-quoted section of the British North America Act, each province has passed laws and regulations concerning religious or devotional exercises at the opening or closing of school and the direct religious instruction, if any, to be given to the pupils. As a general rule, denominational teaching, except in the case of the Roman Catholic separate schools, is excluded; but in almost all cases there is provision for instruction in the "principles of Christian morality" as derived from Holy Scripture. In every province the school law contains a conscience clause permitting the withdrawal of any pupil from religious exercises or instruction if so desired by parent or guardian.

The following is a brief description of the regulations in force in each province. In Prince Edward Island the public schools are non-sectarian. The Bible is authorized to be read, but without comment, explanation or remark by the teacher. It is usual to open the schools with the Lord's Prayer. In Nova Scotia the question of devotional exercises is left to the local board of trustees, subject to the conscience clause, but such exercises are in fact usually held. In New Brunswick the regulations provide that it shall be the privilege of every teacher to open and close the daily exercises of the school by reading a portion of Scripture (out of the common or Douay version as he may prefer) and by offering the Lord's Prayer, and that his duty shall be "to maintain a deportment becoming his position as an educator of the young, and to strive diligently to have exemplified, in the intercourse and conduct of the pupils throughout the school, the principles of Christian morality." The regulation further enumerates certain "moral actions and habits" concerning which it shall be the duty of the teacher to give instruction