

Personal

Montreal, 25th March 1886

Sr J Dawson K.C.M.G. &c
Montreal,

Dear Sir

A meeting of Protestant School Teachers is announced for tomorrow 26th and likely to continue on 27th. I take the liberty of presenting to your notice what I learned some weeks since about, practically, sceptical teaching in the Protestant School at Ste St Paul, in sight of the University of McGill favored as it is with your Presidency & valued influence I said. Speaking with a lady resident there she regretfully expressed herself about this teaching and said that the inspectors of schools, finding there was no reading of the Bible or Bible lessons, insisted on the selections made, as I understand, for schools, being read. and she remarked it would have been better perhaps had this not been done. The book of selections from the Bible I understand it was, & not the Bible itself, was introduced by the

Teacher so terribly abused his position
as to appear to do his worst to destroy
Confidence in Bible narratives & truths,
as in the Creation &c &c. So decided was
this evil teaching been, the lady added,
that in the Sunday School some of the other
boys who attended the day school. There are
about 50 scholars in the day school &
understand — would talk up to the off
Teachers, and say Mr. — the day school
Teacher does not believe that nor
that, showing a deep and sad
destruction of regard for Bible
verities carried out so faithfully in
both the young entrusted to his charge.

I asked why not take steps to remove
or why have such a Teacher appointed
to that solemn responsibility? The
reply was the Trustees are not only
indifferent but a majority decidedly
opposed to Christian truth, and that for
herself & husband as they intended

leaving the place in Spring. They did
not desire to make any disturbance to
of the Trustees, are as believe they are,
of the sort stated, there seems to be no
remedy as the law & the case stands
that is in ordinary way. One of the Trustees
I have long known. He has many very good
Qualities, is a strong temperance man
& a kind sort of a man in a way, but
a decided sceptic there strongest
reason to believe. At least a nominal
Unitarian gone far beyond even Unitarian
latitude in arcansism. His influence over
the place has been for evil in this way. He
has been & I think still is a kind of foreman
in a large Shovel & factory & is a very clever
workman, and also has a great facility
in the kind of talking that does mischief
amongst the class surrounding him.

I brought the matter before Professor D. P. Robins
He introduced it to Rev. E. H. Shepard the
Pastor of the Father Instruction, but the reply is

one expressing great regret at the sad
condition of matters there but that there exists
no ordinary remedy unless the people
make might complaint & the Trustees, as
I infer, be in some way removed.

In view of the meeting tomorrow &
of your very prominent position in Protestant
School matters as well as education
Generally in this Province & I am very
truly, the Dominion & beyond, I
leave the matter to you, hoping that under
our Providential direction the 50
Cote St Paul Protestant Children & all others
everywhere & always shall be delivered
from such malign influences. The teacher
of old who led out his scholars in betrayal
to the enemy & who by the Generals Command
was flogged back to the City by his scholars,
he wanted to be hung, was a sort of honorable man
contrasted with the case referred to. Of course
the ladies name & family cannot be used in any
copying or charge, as most of what I know
is founded on his statements which I implicitly
believe, enquiries ~~and~~ action will of necessity
have to be made independently. Probably
a personal interview with the man yourself
would accomplish very much & I think it would
if it is possible he may be able to show some

explanatory mitigating / circumstances.
At all events I believe your sending
for him for this interview & your dealing
with him, aside from law in the case,
would I believe be attended with much
good. Some change in the law disqualifying
Scotchmen from acting as Teachers or Wardens
or in any way whatever, in connection with
the instruction of youth would seem to
be necessary. The Roman Catholics
have no ceremony I believe in their
schools in making any provision for the
inculcation of Religious truth as
they believe it. I protestants ought
not to be satisfied with less

I am Dear

Truly & Respectfully Yours

J. A. Matthews

So strongly have infidel teachings permeated
the Community referred to, that I was assured
lately, at a ladies aid or something of the kind
that one of the ladies objects to a blessing being
asked on the food provided, saying they
were only indebted to their own generosity for
the food, and the ladies I understand
agreed not to have a blessing asked.

Mathewson
Chas Paul
School

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