

ABSTRACT

The thesis advanced in the following pages is that the Catholic Church made a significant contribution to the development of education in Trinidad during the 19th century.

The contribution of this Church was influenced by events outside the Colony as well as by events within it. From outside the Church received her overall educational policy, her ecclesiastical personnel and a certain amount of finance. Within the Colony the Church had to come to terms with social and political developments during the century : Emancipation, relations between the Government and itself, the social and racial background of significant numbers of its adherents and the attitude of its clergy towards education.

The main involvement of the Church was in primary education for the masses. Later it became involved in Secondary schools, Teacher Training, Industrial and Reformatory schools.

The Church found itself largely in agreement with the British Government as to the main purpose of primary education for the masses. Both conceived this as mainly concerned with religious and moral instruction and both appeared to be satisfied that the requirements

of intellectual training could be adequately met by the attainment of basic literacy and numeracy. On the complementary factors of finance and control they differed considerably. Both wanted control but both also hesitated to accept the financial implications. The Dual System (1870) seemed to meet the reasonable requirements of both parties. While this was accepted in principle, the practical working out of its implications was more difficult and was the subject of controversy throughout the century.

Though the Catholic Church was only one of several denominations involved in public education, its involvement and influence in that field had, by the end of the century, become commensurate with its greater numerical representation in the population.