

ABSTRACT

The majority of the inhabitants of Trinidad in the period under review were Spanish, French-Creoles and Negroes, all Roman Catholics, while the administrative class and some businessmen and planters were British and were Anglicans.

The Imperial and Colonial Governments strengthened their administration by various anglicising measures which included more financial aid to the Anglican Church of the minority than to the Roman Catholic Church of the majority. The latter resented these measures, especially that of financial aid, because it seriously affected what it considered its inalienable right to educate the children of its flock. The distribution of the Negro Education Grant in 1833 to a majority of Anglican societies and the establishment of the ward system of secular schools in 1851 further aggravated the Roman Catholic-Anglican relationship. But the Roman Catholics under the guidance of their Archbishop were generally acquiescent and continued to expand their school system, establishing secondary schools for girls and boys. The attempts of the Anglicans in the secondary field were in contrast, short-lived. In 1859 the Queen's Collegiate School was established as an extension of the secular system, but as Roman Catholics refused to co-operate with it, it mainly benefitted the Anglicans. This

venture was regarded by the Roman Catholic Archbishop as a waste of tax-payers money, namely Roman Catholic money, since he claimed that they were the majority of tax-payers.

Roman Catholic opposition to government's anglicising policies in various fields was hardened in the 1860's and approached a climax. Strengthened by the new aggressive attitude of the Vatican, the Roman Catholics in Trinidad were prepared in 1869 to confront the state on the entire question of education. Coincidentally, the attitude of the Imperial Government was reversed - being more tolerant and liberal. The new governor of Trinidad, A.H. Gordon reflected these qualities. A general inquiry into the state of education was conducted and in 1870 a compromise was effected: government would assist denominational schools and establish its own only where necessary.

Message of His  
Excellency, 1851

P.P.

Smith to Glenelg, 1838

P.O.D.

Message of His Excellency the Governor  
at the Honorable Board of Legislative  
Council of 2nd. April 1851.

Parliamentary Paper.

Memorial to Lord Glenelg, Secretary of  
State for the Colonies, on the subject  
of Education by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Smith.  
S.R. Congress, Vol. 5.

Trinidad Depositions, Despatches.