

all by the time they left school at the age of fourteen. I consider that the French people in this country have a great advantage over the English-speaking people, because they have not only their mother tongue, but they also have the opportunity of going to the English schools and getting a splendid foundation for learning the English language, which they can master by the time they are fourteen years of age.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE: They learn English in all the French colleges, not in the English colleges. Some of them go to the English colleges, but generally they go to the French schools to learn English.

Hon. Mr. CROSBY: For the purpose of my argument I do not care where they learn it, whether it is in a college or in a school. For instance, take a man who has four or five or six or seven, or even ten children—

Hon. Mr. CLORAN: They would be French.

Hon. Mr. CROSBY: Oh, they might be Irish if my honourable friend were around. The point I want to make is that in the province of Nova Scotia, where the limit for school attendance is fourteen years of age, if you take a child beginning school at six or seven years of age, who belongs to a farmer or a fisherman or some other of the working class, and who has to acquire a good start in English and French, it would be impossible for him to learn both English and French grammar by the time he was fourteen. Therefore, I say that if you are going to have French and English taught to the children in the schools, you must raise the school-leaving age limit to sixteen or eighteen. We know that the classes from which the best men in this country come are the farming classes and others who have to work pretty hard for their living; hence it is necessary that their children should have some good starting point. The child who is born of French parents has that great advantage over the child of English-speaking parents, that he first learns his mother tongue, then goes to the English school and learns the English language, while the English-speaking child has not the opportunity of learning French because his parents are not able to send him to a French school, and he has not the time to learn that language. I venture the assertion that there is not a man in public life or playing any part in the business of Canada who would not sacrifice a great deal for the ability to speak the French lan-

guage if it could be bought with money; but that cannot be done. I have gone through most of the British possessions in the West Indies, there I found the French language spoken to a greater extent than the English language. All through Demarara, British Guiana, Trinidad, and Jamaica, which are all British islands, and also in the Bahamas, and on the mainland, you find French spoken very much more than English. I do not say it is the real French. So that we English-speaking people are under the great disadvantage I have mentioned. It would be well for my honourable friend from Grandville (Hon. Mr. Choquette) to exercise his eloquence, his ability and energy, in trying to bring about a better situation. I am afraid my honourable friend sometimes becomes too enthusiastic. There is nobody I have ever met in this country who is opposed to the French language.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN: Yes, there is.

Hon. Mr. CROSBY: No, we are all for the French language. My honourable friend from De Salaberry (Hon. Mr. Béique) is smiling; he has the great advantage of knowing that language; I wish I could speak in French half as well as he can speak in English. It is the English-speaking people who are a good deal in the dark by not having the advantage of knowing the French language. If I were going to be born again and had any choice of a mother other than the one which, thank God, I had, I would choose a French woman. I would not choose a Frenchman as my father; I would dispense with a Frenchman; but I might possibly look for an Irish father.

I do say, honourable gentlemen, that there is a great deal of misunderstanding in these matters. The honourable gentleman who introduced this question is a very energetic and progressive man, and is bound to carry out what he has in his mind, no matter whether he is right or wrong. I am glad to say that in my opinion he is right on this occasion in trying to get this matter understood—and I believe he is trying. While I have been in Parliament I have met many men from Ontario, and, judging from the statement made yesterday by the honourable gentleman from Peel (Hon. Mr. Blain), I believe that the people of Ontario are anxious to do everything they can to give the French people fair play, so that the language may be taught to their children.