

almost entirely Protestant—there were only three Catholics in the House—even there the vote on the second reading of the Bill was only carried by a majority of eight, showing that they recognized there was a minority element in this country that had some right to be considered in granting official and parliamentary recognition to this body. The Government of Ontario declined to approve of the Bill, and it was referred to Ottawa. The Government at Ottawa also declined to interfere. In order that no ground of complaint should exist, the Ontario Government shortly afterwards did what I think was very proper—they passed a general law, under which this association could obtain the authority for acquiring property and for managing its affairs without its being obtruded on the Statute-book as a recognition by the Province of the order itself, because it is for that rather than any other reason that a large minority of the people of this country take exception to this Bill. It necessarily, from its past history, is aggressive from their standpoint. I do not mean to say that there are not very many excellent men in the order, excellent citizens, as good as there are in the country, and no doubt it is the influence of many of the leading members of the order that has kept it within reasonable bounds. If one were quite sure that that kind of influence could always preserve it within bounds, although one might feel offended at the official recognition of the society, still there would be a feeling that it would not be aggressive because of that influence in the order. But, in legislating on questions of this kind, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that, no matter how well-disposed the leaders and controllers of a body of this kind may be, its purposes are unpleasant, aggressive and hostile, to a very large element in this country. The minority element, of course, is very large, and if it were not that Parliaments in the past have considered that some degree of regard was due to their feelings this Bill would have been on the Statute-book long ago. The first time that I had occasion to vote upon this question was so far back as 1858, thirty-two years ago, in a House of which a large majority were Protestants. A similar Bill to this was introduced by Mr. Benjamin, an excellent and a very popular man of that day. The

Bill, on the introduction alone, was only carried by the casting vote of the Speaker, and on the second reading it was thrown out in a House largely composed of Protestants. The motive that actuated them was a recognition of the tender rights of the minority. Hon. gentlemen may not be disposed to consider that those tender rights are entitled to very much consideration, that the feeling has been overdrawn and more highly colored than circumstances justify, but one cannot ignore the history of the past. Without going into any controversial point connected with the history of the society, I may lay down this as a fact which will not be disputed, that it has been aggressive. It may be said that the other side has been aggressive also. No doubt the existence of the Orange association has led to the formation of other societies that had the justification of being organized in self-defence. I do not propose to justify their course. I think it was wrong that they should have been allowed to go into operation—very wrong, in a community such as ours, or any community, that secret associations should exist, where feelings that are developed in close lodge rooms are not those of fraternal charity to people who differ from them. I am not speaking now of one society or another, but we know that the result of the development of this institution was the production of similar associations and orders on the other side, and that has time and again led to very grievous trouble. I will take the opinion of the House of Commons, controlled by one of the best Governments of that day. Under the influence of that Government, here was the conclusion of the House of Commons :

“The obvious tendency and effect of the Orange institution is to keep up an exclusive association in civil and military society, exciting one portion of the people against the other, to increase the rancour and animosity too often unfortunately existing between persons of different religious persuasions—to make the Protestant the enemy of the Catholic and the Catholic the enemy of the Protestant—by processions on particular days, attending with the insignia of the society to excite to breaches of the peace and to bloodshed—to raise up other secret societies among the Catholics in their own defence, and for their own protection against the insults of Orangemen ; to interrupt the course of justice, and to interfere with the course of justice and discipline of the army, thus rendering its services injurious instead of useful, when required on occasions where Catholics and Protestants may be parties. All these evils have been proved by the evidence before the House in regard to Ireland, where the system has long existed on an extended