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"AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM."

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Hon. Senator Bernier's

GREAT SPEECH

as reported in THE SENATE DEBATES

(Continued.)

That kind of schools comes within the remarks of the Privy Council, that is to say, "a school which they (the Catholics) regard as no more suitable for the education of Catholic children than if they were distinctively Protestant in their character." A fact which in the opinion of the Privy Council, constitutes "a legitimate ground of complaint" for the Catholics. Their lordships even go so far as to give an answer to those who maintain "that there should not be any conscienctious objections on the part of the Roman Catholics to attend such schools, if adequate means be provided elsewhere of giving such moral and religious training as may be desired." To that objection their lordships say that "all this is not to the purpose in view of the law, in view of the "parliamentary compact" entered into by the interested parties.

True, in certain cases a Catholic teacher may get into the class-room. But this also is of no consequence, because that Catholic teacher will be bound by the law to have no religion during the school hours. His mouth will be closed as to his faith.

His silence, I dare say, would be in many cases, perhaps more damaging than the silence of a Protestant teacher, because the children who are not in a position at such an age to have a clear understanding of the law or of the circumstances surrounding them, would construe that silence in a suspicious way, and might receive from it impressions of the most unfortunate character. Be that as it may, sure it is that the teacher will have to behave himself, as a pagan teacher, and consequently his presence in the school-house, although he may be a Catholic, does not change the pagan nature of the institution, does not give any advantage or guarantee to Catholic parents, if that teacher faithfully observes the provisions of the law. If he does not, then he breaks the law. As he goes one way or the other, he performs the part of a hypocrite, or of a violator of the law. In the former case he forfeits his rights to the confidence of the parents ; in the latter case he forfeits his rights to his teacher's certificate. In both cases he forfeits his rights as an educator.

As far then as this second aspect of the case is concerned, the arrangement that we are offered, does not recognize any of our rights, does not remove any of our grievances, does not improve our condition ; consequently it is quite unacceptable.

There is another clause which is made use of amongst our own countrymen to bring them to accept the so-called settlement ; it is the 10th clause relating to the use of bilingual textbooks. It is said that by that clause the teaching of the French language is provided for. There was never a more erroneous assertion. That clause has been conceived only as a better method to teach English. And let me say at the outset that in so far as the teaching of the English language is concerned, I have no objection to such a teaching. As a loyal British subject, I quite admit the propriety of all of us learning the language of our metropolis ; as a Canadian I admit, in a general way, the great usefulness of the English language in business, and in social life ; as a member of this body, I regret to be unable to address you in better form in the language of the majority. For all these reasons, and for many others, it is my sincere desire that the English lauguage be taught in all our schools. It has been taught in the past. I never learned English elsewhere than in the Catholic schools.

It was taught, in the Catholic denominatonal schools, in Manitoba before 1890 ; it is taught at present in our Catholic schools, notwithstanding the spoliation we have been and we are daily the object of from an unfair majority. It will be taught in the Catholic denominational schools whenever their rights and privileges are restored. I do not raise my voice against the teaching of the English language. That teaching is reconcilable with the love of my own language and with my desire that it should also be taught properly and throughly, as a matter of propriety, of national pride, and of practical usefulness. But I do raise my voice agains the disingenuous contention that such a clause is a concession made to the French part of the population. There is no such concession in that, and so Mr. Cameron, the Attorney General of Manitoba, said in the speech to which I have already referred. He put it right then, and it is a direct contradiction of the contention of this government. He said :—

Section 10 provides that when ten pupils in a school speak French or any other language other than English as their native language, the teaching of such school shall be conducted in French or such other language and English, upon the bilingual system. It is absolutely necessary that in French, and German Mennonite settlements, the pupils should learn English by the best methods, and experience has shown that there is no method so good as the bi-lingual.

Remark the high propriety suggested here by Mr Cameron, that the pioneers of the country, that those whose rights and privileges have been specially guaranteed by the constitution, should be placed on the same footing as the new comers. However, we have it from Mr. Cameron, a party to the arrangement and a friend of this government, that the real intention of the clause is not for the purpose of teaching French, but to facilitate the learning of the English language. I repeat it here, my objection does not bear upon the fact that English is to be taught. In so far as this is concerned, well and good. But let not this government tell us again that they are making a concession to the French population. They are simply trying to throw dust in the eyes of the people by reducing to a written law what was before the practice, and what is an absolute necessity in practice, from a pedagogical point of view. From this standpoint, it is perfect nonsense to try to teach a language foreign to the language of the child without making use, at least at the beginning, of the language of that child. That was done before, and that is done now in every institution where English and French are taught. Whether one book written in both languages is used, or whether one book in French and one in English are used simultaneously, or whether there is only one book in one of the languages, the teacher supplementing the missing book by his own knowledge of the other language, it is always the bi-lingual system that is followed That is the only reasonable system, and if Mr. Cameron has only discovered that lately, as his language would seem to indicate, he must admit that the French schools, so despised by him and his colleagues, have been long and much in advance of his public schools ; for when I began to learn English, some forty years ago, I began under that system, and that was in a French school. Evidently, everything is not so bad in those humble or French Catholic schools.

One remark more on this subject to show the utter disingenuousness of that clause : who ever heard that to teach French we should use English books ? This simple remark is a conclusive argument against that settlement is so far as it pretends to be a concession to the French population, and to the teaching of its language.

I have demonstrated, I believe, that, on principle, that settlemet does not offer the slightest redress to the minority. But let us suppose for a moment and for the sake of argument, that it does to a certain extent. In practice, that settlement would be unworkable. Let us take the city of Winnipeg as an example. We must take the population as it is and where it is. If we were to go on and make a trial of that settlement, the first thing that would confront us is the fact that our children scattered in all the wards of the city of Winnipeg, and consequently, in all the schools, would be short of the required average attendance for the working of that law. Consequently, while the law would stand in the statnte-book, we would not be placed in a position to take to take advantage of it. We would not have the right to engage a Catholic teacher, nor to avail ourselves of the half hour for religious instruction, nor to make use of the bi-lingnal system. In fact the law would of necessity be a dead letter. That is to say, the settlement takes away with one hand what it pretends to give with the other.

It is a cruel mockery. It is not only an injury but it is an insult to the intelligence of the people and to the high notions that legislators, leaders of the nations must, have of their functions.

From a constitutional point of view there are some two or three remarks which I want to make. The constitution says, and the judgment of the Privy Council affirms, that rights and privileges which belonged to the minority have been affected. Consequently redress must be given to the minority, not to a portion of it only. Now this so-called settlement, even in case it should be all it pretends to be, does not give redress to the minority as a whole, but to certain individuals of it only and it gives that redress to those individuals provided only they are placed under certain circumstances, and provided they are in sufficient number at one place. That condition of number as embodied in the settlement, is not contemplated by the constitution. For instance, an average attendance of at least 40 children in towns and cities is required to authorize the engagement of a Catholic teacher. If that average happens to be only 39, then the law is not applicable. Apart from the manifest injury which is done here to these 39 children, apartfrom the illogical aspect of such a provision, there is, from a eonstittional standpoint, a breach of the law, because the Manitoba Act does not provide that certain individuals of the minority shall be picked up here and there and certain privileges be given to some 40 children, and the same privileges be refused elsewhere to 39 children, but it directs that the minority, whether its number be 10, 20, 25, 50 or more, shall enjoy certain rights, unconditionally in so far as number is concerned. In this regard, then, the settlement is insufficient, both in fact and in law.

The settlement is deficient in another way. There is no permament character about it. The minority has grievances, it has been so declared by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. A grievance arises necessarily from a right of which the party aggrieved has been deprived. Now the idea of right implies the idea of permanency. To be, then, an acceptable measure of justice, the settlement, even if it were an improvement on our present condition, should be for all that it contains at least, of a permanent character.

Such is not the case with the present settlement, in so far as it does not guarantee that in the future, the would-be advantages, which it pretends to concede, shall not be swept away. It must be borne in mind that this arrangement is not acceded to by the local government as being the outcome of a vested right in the minority, but merely as an evidence of the generosity of the provincial legislature and executive. Coupled with this settlement is the assertion on the part of the local government that the power of the provincial legislature has no limitation in matters of education. Mr. Cameron said, in moving the second reading of his bill :

A matter of very considerable importance was they had here preserved the principle of provincial autonomy in matters of education.... the principle of federal interference in our provincial education is forever abandoned ; it can never happen that any political party will endeavour to force on the province educational legislation which the province does not want.

Now, if it is true that henceforth the federal authorities could in no case exercise the powers conferred upon them by the constitution, and recognized by the Privy Council as a legitimate jurisdiction, for the protection of the minorities, it follows that the local authorities may do what they like, go as far as they like in the way of oppression, and there would be no remedy for the victims of such ill-treatment. A good deal has been said about the good faith and the fairness of the Manitoba government. I have my own opinion about all that. If those who speak in that way knew the men and the situation I venture to say that they would not insist on that subject. But for the present, there is no object in discussing that. Granted that the present government is well disposed. Who can say that the next legislature, feeling that no check can be put upon their action, feeling that the federal authorities have no disposition to interfere, who can say that it will not go back even further than the laws of 1890 went, and wipe out every vestige of christianity from the schools, injuring thereby Protestants and Catholics alike ? Taking into account the prejudices that have been so unwisely raised by the Liberal government of Manitoba, taking into account the tendencies which those prejudices have created and strengthened, the probabilities are that within ten years, from now, if we accepted this settlement, our province, and perhaps other provinces of this Dominion, would have a school system entirely outside of all religious influences.

Where would the settlement be then, where would the Roman Catholics be, where would Christian Canada be ? The want of permanency which characterizes the so-called settlement is a capital deficiency which makes it objectionable in every way, and more particularly in this, that it does uot bring the same within the requirements of the constitution as construed by the Privy Council. The constitution gives to the minority a guarantee for a minimum of rights and privileges, and any settlement must not only embody that minimum of rights, but must assure its permanency. Such a feature is entirely wanting in this so-called settlement.

(To be continued.)

Theo. A. Havemeyer Died a Catholic.

Millionaire Sugar Magnate Converted On His Death Bed.

New York, April 28.— The death of Theodore A. Havemeyer, vice-president of the Sugar Trust, was invested with more than usual interest from his sudden conversion to the Catholic faith five hours before his death.

The illness which ended his life had its origin in a cold which he contracted two weeks ago while driving at his country home near Mahwah.

On Sunday morning he began to complain of terrible pains in the stomach and took to his bed. The attending physicians suspected appendicitis, but the low vitality of the patient made an operation impossible. Mr Havemeyer then realized that he was dying.

It was then after 10 P. M. Sunday. Round his bed were grouped his wife, whom he had married thirty-four years ago and who is an ardent Catholic ; his sons, C. H., H. O. and F. C., his married daughters, Mrs. Butler Duncan and Mrs. Tiffany, all of whom had been bred in the faith of their mother.

" While I can help my fellow creatures and do some good," he used to say." it matters not which church I attend."

And so he had gone wherever Mrs. Havemeyer chose to take him. With liberality he had subscribed to the church charities ; he had supported and endowed many Catholic schools.

But somehow he had always stopped short at the snapping of the slender ties that bound him to the Baptist faith, in which his forefathers had lived and in which he had been brought up.

On his death bed, however, he decided upon the step and Father O'Farrell, of the church of the Holy Innocents, received a message summoning him to Mr. Havemeyer's house, 244 Madison avenue. Five hours later he was dead.

Dying at fifty-eight, he leaves a fortune of $15,000,000, a superb farm and country seat at Mahwah and a town house which is one of the sights of New York. The funeral will take place at St. Patrick's Cathedral on Thursday morning.