

bled and sent a petition to the governor-general-in-council. That document, in the briefest form possible, indicated the four points I have mentioned in the four preceding phases of this work, and ended by what is the principal object of this fifth phase, and the prayer read as follows :

"The Catholic section of the board of education in and for the province of Manitoba, most respectfully and earnestly pray his excellency the governor-general-in-council that said last mentioned acts be disallowed to all intents and purposes."

The petition was signed by the archbishop of St. Boniface, president, and by Mr. T. A. Bernier, superintendent. The petition was sent to the lieutenant-governor, who officially transmitted it to Ottawa as shown by the documents of the session.

On the 14th April Hon. Jas. E. P. Prendergast sent to the hon. secretary of state a petition signed by eight members of the loyal opposition of Her Majesty in the Manitoba parliament, complaining of the acts to abolish the old educational system and replace it by a new system, depriving the Catholics of the vested and guaranteed rights. The petitioners affirmed their reasons in a lengthy appendix marked D, sent with the petition, they looked upon such acts as ultra vires and prayed that

"His excellency may be pleased to take such action and grant such relief and remedy as to your excellency may seem right and just."

Hon. Girard, senator, and LaRiviere, M.P., signed the petition.

Remembering what had been told me in 1870 by a governor-general, I thought it was my duty and right to recall those facts to his excellency, the fourth successor to Lord Lisgar. On the 12th April I addressed a memorandum to Lord Stanley to remind his excellency of some of the promises made, not only in the name of Canada, but also in the name of Her Majesty and that by her immediate representative who had assured me that he not only acted as governor-general, but also was honored by Her Majesty with a special mission ad hoc. My memorandum, accompanied by vouchers, ended by a prayer addressed, not to the governor-general-in-council, but the representative of the Queen, hoping that his excellency could perhaps help us in a special way on account of the special promises that had been made to me and to the population in the name of the Queen and of her Imperial government and I said, "I therefore most respectfully and earnestly pray your excellency, as the representative of our beloved Queen to take such measures, which in your wisdom would seem to be the best remedy against the evils above mentioned and against those which the new laws may cause in this part of Her Majesty's domain." This memorandum and the vouchers A, B, C, D, accompanying it are in the public records. My venerable friend, Mgr. Lafleche gave us the

help of his sympathetic voice in a petition addressed to the secretary of state.

The demands already mentioned covered all that could be asked; the disallowance or all proper and just remedies.

Petitions addressed to the governor-general-in-council are in fact addressed to the whole Canadian legislature. The government is but the executive committee of the house, to which it is responsible, and the government has to answer for its acts as well as for its omissions. Every member of parliament has the right to know the petitions addressed to the privy council; not only has the right to know them, but even that of judging them, to urge their acceptance or refusal according to his personal convictions. Thus, when petitions are addressed to the governor-general-in-council, they are addressed to the representatives of the people, not only collectively but also individually. Is it then a parliamentary error to say that demands addressed to the executive do not concern the chief of the Opposition or his supporters? The opposite would be true. If anyone by his position must, more than any other, have the scrutiny of the requests addressed to the government and of the manner in which they are received by it, it is surely the chief or some of the members of the Opposition.

This is so true that, in the present case, our petitions had hardly reached Ottawa when the attention of the commons to those petitions was called by

HON. EDWARD BLAKE.

I pray those who busy themselves about the disallowance of the school laws of Manitoba to pay special attention to what follows; in it there is something that deserves so much the more to be known that not being aware of it has prevented even sincere men from fairly judging the question. To express myself more plainly and explicitly to those who ignore or forget what was done in parliament I say: "It is not the minority of Manitoba nor Archbishop Tache that have abandoned the claim for disallowance." The granting of this amount was made impossible by the unanimous vote of the Commons of Ottawa on Mr. Blake's resolution. I want to be well understood, my words are not a reproach addressed to one of our public men, one of the most distinguished and the most generally esteemed; Hon. Edward Blake does not need my testimony in order that his superior intelligence be known and appreciated; on the other hand I will not depreciate him by saying that he has on the constitutionality of the act, of which we complain, notions not different from mine. I have no doubt of Mr. Blake's honesty, so that I am convinced that when he got up in the house it was not to add another difficulty to the solution of the question no more than to diminish the responsibility of Sir John A. Macdonald and his government. In other words Mr. Blake works neither against