

schools. Catholics in this matter wish to hold their own, and not to domineer over others. People of other denominations do not or cannot understand that with us the church and school go together. As well deprive us, or tax us for a separate church as for a separate school. Parents have a divine right to Home Rule. No sensible good Catholic thinks otherwise. For this reason I am sorry for the writer, that he calls himself "a Roman Catholic" and has the presumption to speak for English speaking Catholics in this country. In the British House of Commons in 1902 the Irish members sank their political differences, at the request of the English hierarchy, and voted with the Anti-Home Rule government, in order to carry the "Education Bill," which gave Catholic schools to England and Scotland. If this noble act of faith and generosity of the Irish is only in keeping with their history, I know from history and experience that English Catholics are equally true and sound on this question. The single exception of Mr. Van Koughnet proves the general rule.

With your kind indulgence I offer for his consideration the following quotation from the British prime minister, Mr. Balfour.

"The part of the Education Bill which deals with religious teaching in schools is, and always has been, recognized by me as being one of the most difficult problems that could be dealt with by any legislature. We dealt with it in 1902 in the best way that was open to us, and in that bill, though I was denounced by Non-conformists day after day and week after week, there is not one Non-conformist grievance under the old act of 1870 which has not been either entirely removed or enormously mitigated. But I admit, as I have over and over again admitted in the House of Commons while the bill was passing through it, that the system left by that bill, based as it was on the old act of 1870, had anomalies and had difficulties. Well, if the next government can remove them, well and good, but remember, the only direction in which a change can also be a reform, in which an alteration can carry with it an improvement is one in which the parent of the child is given greater control or a greater choice over the religious education which that child is to have. That is the true fundamental principle at which we ought to aim. If the other side can find a plan which will give the parents full control over the religious education, denominational or undenominational, which is to be given to their child, it shall have my support. That is consistent with our notions of liberty, with our notions of parental responsibility.

"Yes but it is not what the Non-conformists want. Many Non-conformists do want it. It is not what those who are electorally driving the other side desire, or will tolerate, and I am looking forward with profound interest to their attempt to deal with this difficult and critical subject—not in the spirit which I have described, not in the spirit of giving full parental control over the religion of the child, giving the religious education which the parent desires—but according to some cut and dried plan which happened to suit the Non-conformists in 1870 and is still embodied in our legislation. That plan will never succeed—it is inconsistent with the natural rights of parents—inconsistent I believe, ultimately with the religious education of the people."

JOSEPH MCCARTHY, O.M.I.
St. Mary's, March 8, 1905.

MR. VAN KOUGHNET'S REPLY
To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir—It has been my privilege to know Father McCarthy for a good many years and I regret he has seen fit to criticize me adversely and so severely in the matter of my letter published in your issue of the 3rd inst. The good priest accuses me of being void of affection for the French Canadians. I did take occasion to criticize at some length the Nationalists of Quebec, as a party, in their attitude towards the Empire. The Nationalists, it is true, are made up of French Canadians but not all of them—if I am not mistaken I took occasion in writing that letter to point out that many of my most cherished friends both in the east and west were French Canadians.

Then Father McCarthy goes on to say that I am not worthy to be called a Roman Catholic because, as he claims, I have written in favor of non-Catholic schools. If the good priest will take the trouble to read over my letter again and a little more carefully, he will discover that instead of being in favor of non-Catholic schools, I was explicit in pointing out that where the people of the new provinces want separate schools it will be in their power to secure them by acts of their legislatures.

The good priest also taunts me with being presumptuous in daring to speak for other English speaking Catholics in the country. I may say, for his information that, before writing, I was very careful indeed to learn the views of others, and among these men whom I do not think the good priest would care to meet in controversy for more reasons than one.

I think, if the truth were told, the real fault the good old priest has to find with me is not that I have said anything that involves my faith, but that I am not afraid to tell the world that there are many Roman Catholics in the country both French and English, who are loyal British subjects.

M. SCOTT VAN KOUGHNET.
Winnipeg, March 10, 1905.

STRIKING LETTER IN FAVOR OF SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

Mr. E. W. Thomson writes to the Boston Transcript.

Ottawa, March 10.—Sir Wilfrid Laurier, during the political turmoil of the past fortnight, with his leadership threatened, his ministry endangered, his country liable to be convulsed by a most serious feud, has evinced little anxiety or distress. He has been regularly in his parliamentary place, doing business alertly, his mind on the matter in hand, his voice composed, his courtesy unflinching. In private he has been almost blithe. "The world is a place of troubles," he will say philosophically, with an almost imperceptible lifting of the head as if to confront the storm, and a smile at once patient and genial. His unhurried aspect is always remarkable when there are roars around and breakers ahead. In quiet seas he sometimes permits himself the slightly fretful air of an amiable yachtsman in a dead calm. When others get excited he gets cooler and cooler. Such aeons of time he then appears to have! He will deal with the matter of the moment as if there were no other. Yet he has not a minute to waste. There are, at any instant, fifty things demanding his attention. Often his anteroom is thronged. His desk is littered orderly with documents awaiting his signature. Usually he has raised his pen to greet his visitor. It is scratching away again as the individual departs, for the five seconds before the next comes on must be saved by a man who "lives as ever in his Great Taskmaster's eye." There you have the secret of Laurier's strength, patience, assiduity, happiness, courage. How can a man be beaten, or even much perturbed who is secure in the citadel of his own heart?

Political defeat would be for Laurier but an incident in the travail of his spirit from the light whence it came to the light whither it goes. But any aggressor who proceeds on the notion that he has to deal with a mere contemplative sage in the premier, will surely find himself in the dreadful hands of a past master in Jiu Jitsu. That is much the art of allowing assailants to break their own bones.

The matter of the present crisis is that of confirming the separate schools system of the Territories in the bills which design to erect two new provinces from that region. Before proceeding in this business, which was sure to be vexatious and dangerous, but which had to be dealt with this session, Sir Wilfrid carefully re-examined the whole ground, with which he had been familiar all his long political life. Having himself decided what was right and necessary in the premises, he caused his minister of justice to clothe the intention in legal phraseology. That phrasing is objected to by Mr. Sifton and some other friends. If it had been devised by effect of a direct inspiration from heaven it would have been objectionable to enemies. If anybody can and will put the intention in better garb the premier will cheerfully accept the change of fashion. But he will stand or fall on the essentials of his intent. The other wills trying to nag and bully him out of that resolution must take the consequences of persisting unto a cataclysm.

In this attitude Sir Wilfrid is strictly within his rights. Having been elected leader of his party, and thrice elected leader of his country, he has the responsibilities of the trust. He would show an unfitness for the position did he imitate the pusillanimities of some who ever clamor that the head ought to submit to direction by the tail.

If Laurier were not a Catholic there could be no sort of color for the suspicion that he is moved in this matter by peculiar consideration for his

own church. The separate schools system of Canada has been assailed over and over again, in one form or another, during the past sixty years. It has invariably been sustained by large majorities of the electorate of the most Protestant province of Ontario. The late Sir Oliver Mowat, Presbyterian elder and premier of Ontario, met every sort of open or insidious attack on that system, and won by great majorities every time during twenty-four years. The Toronto Globe, which has now turned Turk on Laurier, supported the system, not merely as one established by the Confederation act, but as a good system per se, in many editorials of fifteen to twenty years ago, all penned with conviction that the system is admirable and just. The Rev. Mr. Milligan, moderator of the Presbyterian assembly, came out last week with a declaration of his opinion that the institution of such schools is good, right, required by the spirit of toleration and the interests of Christianity. The late Sir John Macdonald, long Premier of Canada, and almost always backed by an Ontario majority, fought for the institution of those schools before Confederation began, and won triumphantly. The assertion that they are maintained in Ontario by effect of the compact with Quebec, which the Confederation act, or Constitution of Canada, records, is therefore erroneous. Though a general and profound Americanization of that province would appear to be indicated by the loudness of the outcry against separate schools, every transaction of the past indicates that they would be maintained in full force today, could the question be submitted uncomplicated to the electors.

It was the Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, Presbyterian, and premier of Canada in 1875, whose ministry, backed by an enormous Ontario majority, put into the Northwest Territories act the clause which gave and which secures to creed minorities in that region the rights and liberties which Sir Wilfrid Laurier could not take from them if he would, and which he is constitutionally bound to provide for in his impending act for raising the Territories to the status of provinces. That clause was suggested by the Hon. Edward Blake, at one time minister of justice in Mackenzie's ministry, a devout Anglican. Mr. Blake then said that it was essential to our obtaining a large immigration to the Northwest that we should tell the people beforehand, what their educational rights were to be in the country where we invited them to settle. . . . It seemed to him, having regard to the fact that, as far as we

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could expect at present, the general character of that population would be somewhat analogous to the population of Ontario there should be some provision in the constitution by which they should have conferred upon them the same rights and privileges with regard to religious instruction as those possessed by the people of the province of Ontario. Mr. Donald A. Smith, now Lord Strathcona, Presbyterian, then member for a Manitoba constituency, backed Blake. So did the late Hon. David Mills, more recently a Dominion minister of justice, a Methodist. The clause was adopted without a division by the House of Commons protestant Ontario there and then preponderant. That clause reads:

"When, and so soon as any system of taxation shall be adopted in any district or portion of the Northwest Territories, the lieutenant-governor, by and with the consent of the council or assembly, as the case may be, shall

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pass all necessary ordinances in respect of education; but it shall therein be always provided that a majority of the ratepayers of any district or portion of the Northwest Territories, or any lesser portion or subdivision thereof, by whatever name the same may be known, may establish such schools therein as they may think fit, and make the necessary collection and assessment of rates therefor; and further, that the minority of the ratepayers therein, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, may establish separate schools therein, and that, in such latter case, the ratepayers establishing such Protestant or Roman Catholic separate schools shall be liable only to assessments of such